BYZANTINE HEROIC POETRY



David Ricks

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PREFACE

The production of a bilingual edition of the surviving monuments of Byzantine heroic poetry, the Escorial version of *Digenes Akrites* and the *Armoures*, requires no apology: the first of these works has never been translated, to the best of my knowledge, into any language—though there are two English translations of the very different Grottaferrata version (Mavrogordato 1956; Hull 1972); the second has been translated only into French (by H.Grégoire; see Alexiou 1985: 190–4) and Russian (by Destouny in 1877). This little book has, moreover, some claim to novelty in that it presents a reinterpretation of the Escorial *Akrites* as a collection of five related but separate poems. (This view develops the work of previous students, as I indicate in the Introduction, but the reader should be warned that none has taken it so far as the present writer: several items listed in the Bibliography offer alternative views.) After a brief general introduction, accordingly, introductory notes to the poems follow, outlining the particular characteristics of each. It should be stressed at this point that the titles used for parts of the Escorial version have no manuscript authority. They correspond to the following sections in Alexiou's edition (1985):

The Lay of the Emir = section A'
Akrites among the Raiders = section B'
The Romance of Akrites = section Γ'
Exploits of Akrites = section Δ'
The Retirement and Death of Akrites = sections E' and ΣΤ'

THE TEXT

The text here is based on that of Alexiou's magisterial edition. The aim has been to produce a readable text, one which plumps for a preferred reading (indicating this in a footnote) instead of hedging bets with different symbols. Verses I believe to be interpolated appear (with accompanying translation) at the foot of the page; lines already deleted by Alexiou (which are characteristically the result of mere scribal muddle) I silently

omit. I have transposed a number of verses (but never whole sections, like Kalonaros 1941 and Trapp 1971) and made a small number of emendations. Supplements printed by Alexiou that are certain or value-free have had the < > symbols round them removed; some less certain supplements have been removed; and I have made one or two suggestions of my own. One or two minor orthographic inconsistencies have been regularized, but no general attempt has been made to tamper with the linguistic surface (note e.g. verses 59/129 or 1279/87); I have sometimes repunctuated.

THE TRANSLATION

The translation is essentially a crib with no pretensions to literary merit; but certain concessions have been made to clarity and readability, of which the following might be noted: a more sparing use of asyndeton and parataxis; the maintenance of the past tense throughout without the original's frequent switches to the present; the removal of comparatives and superlatives. Names of persons are normally kept in the form found in the text; place-names, where familiar and undisputed, appear in the normal forms.

THE NOTES

These are footnotes rather than a commentary, and I have endeavoured to keep them brief and few: their aim is rather to point out stumbling-blocks than to comment on every felicity. This means, first, acknowledging and defending divergences from Alexiou 1985; and, secondly, providing help on difficult or salutary points. The translation itself naturally does much of the work of an interpretative commentary; and I aim principally to elucidate questions of structure and interpretation, allowing myself one or two parallels (see Alexiou 1987: 60), but with very sparing reference to the scholarly literature. Though brief, I believe that the notes are not entirely without novelty, largely for the reason adduced by this classical scholar:

> A translator, being obliged by the nature of his task to attend to every single successive phrase of his author, however plain the meaning may seem, and to consider the intelligibility of what he renders to the uninitiated, sometimes discovers points of real difficulty which have escaped the most thorough commentators, or arrives at fresh solutions of old problems. (Powell 1935: 72)

GENERAL

The principal aim of this book is to present the reader with the texts and a minimum of introductory and explanatory material. The samples of Byzantine heroic poetry that we have are varied, and varying in merit, but they are proof that Eastern Christendom was not without the *chansons de geste* that we find in the West. Ezra Pound brought the *Cid's* virtues to the attention of the modern reader (1968: 66); and, following his criteria, we may say that at their best, their swift narration, their vigour, the humanness of their characters and their inability to grow old place these Byzantine poems rightfully with the great works of the medieval West.

Bibliography

The bibliography relating to the Akritic field is enormous, and this list is highly selective: it includes only matter directly relevant to the Escorial *Digenes Akrites* and the *Armoures* and not items concerned with other literary versions or popular adaptations. Furthermore, it is restricted, with a few exceptions, to works in English. There is inevitably some overlap in the categories below.

1. EDITIONS AND BASIC AIDS:

S. Alexiou, *Βασίλειος Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης καὶ τὸ Ἆσμα τοῦ Ἀρμούρη* (Athens 1985). [The standard edition, with ample introduction, notes and glossary. Alexiou's *editio minor* (Athens 1990), which appeared too late for me to use, contains a new introduction and a useful selection of criticism.]

E. Trapp, *Digenes Akrites: Synoptische Ausgabe der ältesten Versionen* (Vienna 1971). [A parallel text of the E, G and 'Z' versions.]

H.G. Beck, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Volksliteratur* (Munich 1971). [A concise general account, with useful references.]

S. Kyriakides, *Ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτας: ἀκριτικὰ ἔπη, ἀκριτικὰ τραγούδια, ἀκριτικὴ ζωή* (Athens 1926)

The introduction to Alexiou's edition is to be supplemented by the remarks in his indispensable monograph *Ἀκριτικά* (Herakleion 1979) and the following articles:

«Παρατηρήσεις στὸν Ἀκρίτη», *Ἀριάδνη* 1 (1982) 41–57

«Ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης τοῦ Ἐσκοριάλ», *Πρακτικὰ τῆς Ἀκαδημίας Ἀθηνῶν* 58 (1983) 68–83

«Γιὰ τὴν ἔκδοση τοῦ Ἀκρίτη καὶ τοῦ Ἀρμούρη», *Μαντατοφόρος* 25/6 (1987) 57–62

2. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

M.J. Angold, *The Byzantine Empire. A Political History 1025–1204* (London 1984)

H. Grégoire, *Autour de l'épopée byzantine* (London 1975). [Collected papers on the subject by the most thorough-going of 'traditionalists'.]

G. Huxley, 'Antecedents and Context of *Digenes Akrites*', *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies* 15 (1974) 317–38

M.J. Jeffreys, 'Digenis Akritas and Commagene', in E.M. and M.J. Jeffreys, *Popular Literature in Late Byzantium* (London 1983)

N. Oikonomidès, 'L' "épopée" de Digénis et la frontière orientale de Byzance aux Xe et XIe siecles', *Travaux et Memoires* 7 (1979) 335–97

3. THE SOURCES

R. Beaton, 'Was *Digenes Akrites* an Oral Poem?', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 7 (1981) 7–27

A.R. Dyck, 'On *Digenis Akritas* Grottaferrata Book 5', *Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies* 24 (1983) 185–92. [Despite its title, this article provokes thoughts about the origins and nature of the E version also.]

H. Grégoire, *Ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτας* (New York 1942). [A general account to which few would now subscribe but which contains food for thought about the question of sources.]

E.M. Jeffreys, 'The Comnenian Background to the *romans d'antiquité* ', in *Popular Literature in Late Byzantium*. [Identifies literary interaction between Latin West and Greek East at this period.]

S. MacAlister, 'Digenis Akritas: the first scene with the Apelatai', *Byzantion* 54 (1984) 51–74. [For the argument that the poem I term 'Akrites among the Raiders' is a separate entity.]

4. THE POEMS: STYLE AND INTERPRETATION

R. Beaton, *The Medieval Greek Romance* (Cambridge 1989), ch. 3. [A sophisticated general account, in the context of the romances generally.]

D. Ricks, 'Is the Escorial *Akrites* a Unitary Poem?', *Byzantion* 59 (1989) 184–207 and 'The pleasures of the chase: a motif in *Digenes Akrites*', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 13 (1989) 290–4

There are three handbooks which place and assess the poems in a general Byzantine and Modern Greek literary context:

C.Th. Dimaras, *A History of Modern Greek Literature* (London 1974)

L. Politis, *A History of Modern Greek Literature* (Oxford 1973)

C.A. Trypanis, *Greek Poetry from Homer to Seferis* (London 1981)

5. SURVIVALS

R. Beaton, *Folk Poetry of Modern Greece* (Cambridge 1980) and '*Digenes Akrites* and Modern Greek Folk Song. A Reassessment', *Byzantion* 51 (1981) 22–43

R.M. Dawkins, 'Some Modern Greek Songs from Cappadocia', *American Journal of Archaeology* 38 (1934) 112–22

A. Frantz, 'A Byzantine Epic and its Illustrators', *Byzantion* 15 (1940/1) 87–91

M. Herzfeld, 'Social Borderers: Themes of Conflict and Ambiguity in Greek Folk Song', *Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies* 6 (1980) 61–80 and *Ours Once More. Folklore, Ideology and the Making of Modern Greece* (Austin 1982)

J. Mavrogordato (ed.), *Digenes Akrites* (Oxford 1956). [A bilingual edition of the Grottaferrata version, with a still useful introduction.]

G. Morgan, 'Cretan Poetry: Sources and Inspiration: §2 Digenis in Crete', *Κρητικὰ Χρονικά* 14 (1960) 44–68

ADDITIONAL

To the above should now be added the following important contribution, which appeared while this book was at proof stage: *Αφιέρωμα στον Στυλιανό Αλεξίου, Αριάδνη* (yearbook of the Humanities Faculty of the University of Crete) vol. 5 (1989). Pp. 125-92 of this *Festschrift* are occupied by no fewer than eight short studies by various hands relating to Byzantine heroic poetry and suggesting further avenues for research and interpretation.

INTRODUCTION

As indicated in the Preface, this book aims at a reappraisal of Byzantine heroic poetry. In the view of this writer, set out more fully elsewhere (Ricks 1989a), the E *Digenes Akrites* is to be regarded as five separate poems; and they, together with the *Armoures*, constitute our corpus of the genre. Here I confine myself to some very general remarks about the genre as a whole: further materials appear in the introductions to the individual poems, where marked differences in style, sources and historical background are noted. None of this introductory material either presupposes a knowledge of, or assumes any great interest in, the history of scholarship, and I have kept references to a minimum.

The broad plan of this Introduction is as follows:

(i) The rediscovery of Byzantine heroic poetry in the nineteenth century: its impact on scholarly views.

(ii) The debate about the origins and status of E: a conflict between preconceptions.

(iii) The revaluation of E by Stylianos Alexiou, and the present writer's development of this: an attempt at redefinition.

(iv) The literary and historical background to the genre: a reassessment.

(v) The style of the poetry: a summary of some notable features.

(i) Folk poetry has occupied a central place in the modern Greek mind, and a distinctive relation prevails between folk poetry and personal poetry in Greek. It is not just that a revival of European interest in folk poetry was part of the Romantic nationalism which also brought the founding of the modern Greek state, and that the deeds of the War of Independence were memorably celebrated in song: it is that there has been a single staple metre of both folk and written poetry since the twelfth century. In other words, we are presented at once with a type of cultural continuity here which does not stand or fall with questions of national identity, and with a broad unity of poetic sensibility which is not matched,

for example, by English with its traditional distinction between more 'popular' four-stress and more 'classical' five-stress rhythms (Attridge 1982). It is not surprising, then, that the founding father of modern Greek poetry, Dionysios Solomos, drew, however circumspectly, on the heritage of folk song in his attempt to give expression in Greek to his (profoundly European) sensibility (Chatzegiakoumes 1968); nor is it surprising that, despite lip-service to the heritage of the ancients, the debt of modern Greek poetry to the folk tradition is far more pervasive. It was in the context of the debate on the origins (and, inextricably, the destiny) of modern Greek poetry, that a critic of Solomos, Spyridon Zambelios (1859:37–41) sowed the seeds of interest in the medieval origins of Greek poetry.

More or less without comment, Zambelios pointed out that a song called 'The Sons of Andronikos' (Academy 1962: 59–63) contained a number of authentic Byzantine proper names, and hence perhaps related real events. The idea was taken up by other scholars, and the search began for other monuments of medieval poetry. In 1868 a Greek schoolmaster and nationalist from Trebizond got hold of a MS from the monastery of Soumela (Bryer 1987), whose contents were published by Constantine Sathas and Emile Legrand as *Les exploits de Digénis Akritas* (1875), now known as the T version. By 1904 another five versions, in MSS dating from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, had been discovered or identified. Meanwhile an edition of *Armoures* had been published in St Petersburg in 1877; and a number of folk songs featuring the hero 'Digenes' or 'Akritas' (four of which had in fact been published before Zambelios' essay of 1859) aroused increasing interest among scholars. (Note that the hero's name in the literary versions is Akrit*e*s, and that Sathas and Legrand's title represents a conflation of the literary and the folk traditions.) By a pattern which, albeit related to the specific dynamics of Greek irredentism (Herzfeld 1982), exhibited the features of a pan-European preoccupation with medieval 'national epics', all the Byzantine heroic poetry discovered was mined for national content rather than examined for aesthetic coherence. The preoccupation with finding the historical realities *behind* the texts was dominant—so that the most influential scholar of the period, N.G. Politis (1909a) actually identified layers in the Cretan Renaissance romance *Erotokritos* going back far into the Middle Ages! The differences between (and artistic weaknesses of) versions of *Digenes Akrites* were happily ignored in favour of an ideal archetype of the 'national epic'. Meanwhile, less partisan scholars were

unimpressed by the quality of the material: W.P. Ker, for one, speaking of the 'gloating Byzantine respectability' of the poem (1904: 304–5). Even the most enthusiastic supporters of Greek vernacular literature have rarely had a good word to say for *Digenes Akrites* as a poem, with the feebleness of its structure occasioning particular criticism.

(ii) However, the E version, though long the Cinderella of all the versions, being seemingly the most elliptical and corrupt, did over the years provoke debate about the nature of Byzantine heroic poetry. This text, like the *Poema de Mio Cid*, survives in just one MS (of the mid- or late fifteenth century, in the Escorial in Madrid)—which shows that our knowledge of the achievements of medieval heroic poetry hangs by a thread. Five verses were published in 1897, without the poem's being identified; and it was not till 1904 that Karl Krumbacher identified the poem and published 300 verses, together with some commendation of its style as being close to that of Greek folk poetry. Though the observation was correct (and the aesthetic judgement a legitimate one), the inferences to be drawn as to the nature and origins of E were not clear, and the ensuing debate took on some of the features of the modern Greek 'Language Question'. It is characteristic that the first published edition of E was in the folklore journal *Laographia* (Hesseling 1911/12).

That first edition was highly unsatisfactory, and sufficiently hard to read that it left E as an unattractive version from the point of view of the man of letters; a second (Kalonaros 1941) was little better. Furthermore, the comparisons made between E and the modern Greek folk songs were often unsystematic and unhelpful. Some believed that the similarities between E and the folk songs were to be explained as a folk colouring introduced into the work by a scribe writing much later than the original (which would have pre-dated the Grottaferrata version ('G') of the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries); or even as the product of a late 'oral dictation' (Morgan 1960). However, two scholars in particular, Stilpon Kyriakides (1926) and Henri Grégoire (1975:XVIII, originally 1932), had seen that, whatever the problems of E, it did seem to preserve unique and valuable material. In the first place, a number of proper names in E appeared to be absent from the other versions and to have an authenticity which could be confirmed by recourse to historical and geographical evidence. Furthermore, if the hypothesis that *Digenes Akrites* originated, at some remove, in popular lays was correct, then the presence in E of passages strikingly like parts of the modern song tradition deserved

serious examination. But although both Kyriakides and Grégoire did much to further the understanding of parts of the text, proposing a number of new readings and interpretations, the lack of a sound edition of the whole meant that their involvement with E remained limited. Their contribution to the understanding of E consisted, in the end, of certain local suggestions, and no systematic attempt had yet been made to link into the discussion questions of form and style.

The 1970s saw at last a more determined attempt to get to grips with E, and Erich Trapp's edition (1971) represented a major improvement on its predecessors. In particular, the editor's metrical restorations dealt a powerful blow to the view that E was not written entirely in the traditional 'political verse'. Trapp's, however, was a critical edition without explanatory notes, and many problems, in particular those concerning the structure of the text, remained unresolved, despite the additional contribution made to the restoration of the text by Ioanna Karagianne (1976).

(iii) In 1979 the E text was made the subject of a challenging revisionist monograph by Stylianos Alexiou. Alexiou began by demolishing the theory that E was an oral dictated text: how, if that were the case—given that the Greek folk tradition is generally unconcerned to preserve proper names in their original forms—could we account for the presence in the text of so many authentic elements from the Eastern borders in the Byzantine period? Place-names from areas such as Syria with which connections had long since been lost; antique military terms—all these *lectiones difficiliores* from Byzantium had left no trace either in Greek folk song or, for that matter, in G. Many passages in E over which earlier editors had despaired could in fact be explained with reference to this historical material; and Alexiou went on to demonstrate this in his edition of 1985, which included also the short lay of *Armoures*.

For the first time E became a readable text, though Alexiou recognized that it was still a corrupt one. (In particular, a degree of surface linguistic corruption had occurred that rightly determined the editor against attempting to restore an 'original text' free of two or more centuries of scribal corruption: the fifteenth-century Cretan ὀρπίζαν, for example (532) would not be restored to a probable ἐλπίζαν.) And for the first time the structure of the text appeared clearly to view. Alexiou had earlier hinted at the possibility that what we have in E is not actually a single poem, and it is this thought-provoking and potentially revolutionary suggestion, and the directions in which it may be developed, that will occupy the next few pages.

As early as 1905 the looseness of structure in *Digenes Akrites* had led to Karolides' judgement that the work was a 'series of *epyllia*' (Alexiou 1985: ριβ'). In 1966 Beck (see 1971) demonstrated to general agreement that E exhibited the 'bipartite structure' familiar to us from *Beowulf* and other medieval texts: it was quite clear that the first part of *Digenes Akrites* could be understood as a 'Lay of the Emir' preceding the exploits of the hero himself (the *Digenes-Roman*). It was in the light of this that Alexiou suggested (1979: 87) that 'The text does not appear organically unitary, and we shall perhaps be able to show that it consists of more than two . . . parts.'

Alexiou's opinion coincides with views expressed by a number of other scholars. M.J. Jeffreys observes of *Digenes Akrites* in general that 'Even an act of compilation would surely have produced a more integrated work' and, challengingly, that 'There are two distinct elements in the poem as it stands, and they may require different literary and historical interpretations' (1983: X, 19, 16). C.A. Trypanis, similarly (1981: 454), speaks of the work as being 'not even a single unit' and 'mechanically joined together'. Scholars who have specifically examined questions of structure have agreed on the fact that the work cannot be reduced to a single entity: 'In any case, it is clear, that in *Digenis Akritas* the individual song is primary, the combination of songs into a connected narrative secondary and superficial' (Dyck 1983: 192; see also MacAlister 1984).

Alexiou has offered further comments which prompt thought about the nature of E. 'I believe that in the E text', he writes (1982: 54), 'the second part [i.e. that concerning Akrites himself] contains more than two parts loosely bound together.' Or again (1983: 80): 'The parts of *Akrites* are not just two in number, as was suggested by H.G. Beck . . . There seem to be more.' In his edition (1985: λγ') Alexiou acknowledges that the first three sections, especially [the Lay of the Emir; the episode in which Akrites visits the raiders; and the episode in which Akrites carries off his bride] 'have a certain self-sufficiency and could . . . be read or recited singly.' In his most recent contribution, finally, Alexiou indicates that we may be speaking of more than one poet (1987: 57).

The present edition sets out *Digenes Akrites* as a collection of five poems, and the introduction to each will attempt to explain how it is to be understood as a separate entity; and, where speculation seems not unwarranted, to indicate how the poem relates to earlier material. Hitherto the gap between the oral lays which we know to have existed in Byzantium

(of which only *Armoures* has survived in manuscript form) and a work on a large scale (whether it be romance or epic) has never been bridged in an account of *Digenes Akrites*.

(iv) What can we assert with safety about the background, literary and historical, to Byzantine heroic poetry as we have it? I offer here a sceptical account. Above all, by taking the literary background as primary I attempt to avoid the concentration of an earlier generation on historical material *extractable from* the poetry to the exclusion of material—historical or not—which *shapes* the poetry.

The E manuscript dates from the fifteenth century, as does at least the earlier of our two MSS of *Armoures*. But it is universally agreed that the original form of each of the above dates back far into the Byzantine period. How far, though? In the comparable debate about the *Song of Roland*, 'traditionalists' have argued that the materials in the Oxford version are derived from much older works (perhaps even back as far as the historical events of 788 on which the poem is based); 'individualists' that the continual hypothesizing of lost sources underestimates the powers of a single composer who has reduced disparate elements to a coherent form. Similarly, in the case of *Digenes Akrites* apparent references to events of, especially, the ninth and tenth centuries have led to the hypothesis that our written version is based on much older materials. An 'individualist' view has never been maintained, partly because the *Akrites* embarrassingly fails to exhibit the coherence in form and conception of *Roland*, partly because its value to the culture has been understood in terms relating less to artistic merit than to its preservation or conservation of a Byzantine heroic spirit which might be revived among the present-day Greeks (Ricks 1989a). Treading warily round questions of ultimate origins, what hard evidence do we have for the date of the Akritic materials we possess?

The only explicit references to Akrites in the rest of Byzantine literature occur in two different versions of one of the 'Ptochoprodromic' poems, which are our most substantial survival from the literary revival under the Comnenes. These begging poems, which may have been written by the learned writer Theodore Prodromos (perhaps 1100–1170s) in another *persona* include one which relates the speaker's tribulations in a monastery while subject to the rapacity of the senior monks. He exclaims, in a passage containing a number of Akritic formulas (Hesseling and Pernot 1910: 55):

> Would that a second Akrites had been there then
> to tuck in his tunic, to take his club,
> and to smash them, those hateful dishes!

In some (though not, admittedly the best) MSS of the same poem (Hesseling and Pernot 1910: 67), the emperor Manouel Komnenos (reigned 1143–80) is described as

> Manouel Komnenos, the offspring of the purple,
> the happy victor, the great performer of exploits,
> the sturdy commander, the new Akrites.

It is quite clear from these passages that 'Akrites' here is understood as a proper name belonging to a specific person (though not necessarily to what we would call a historical personage), not as any kind of institutional title (see below). This argues a literary cult of Akrites at some time after the memory of the actualities of the eastern borders has been lost; in other words, some time after the defeat by the Seljuk Turks at the battle of Manzikert (1071) drastically reduced the bounds of the Byzantine empire. But as the name occurs in E without explanation (as in no other version of *Digenes Akrites*) it also indicates that we are dealing with a well-known figure. The first passage presents the hero in familiar guise; the second, significantly, likens him to the emperor Manouel. The proposal (Angold 1984) that the new cult of Akrites has a direct relation to Manouel's successful eastern campaigns is an attractive one. It would explain why vernacular but evidently not uneducated authors such as those of the Ptochodromic poems and (some parts at least of) E would choose to write of such a figure. It would also give Akrites that role he evidently possesses as the incarnation of all the valour of the wild East: Manouel's campaign could be mythically described as the revival of the 'spirit of Akrites' just as a U.S. president might cite heroes of Western films in support of his policies or style. At any rate, the popularity of Akrites is attested.

But we cannot be more specific about the date of the E poems or *Armoures*. In the first place, the dating of the Ptochoprodromic poems is a matter of dispute. Furthermore, we cannot tell whether the Ptochodromic poems reflect a trend or set one—do they refer to an oral or written tradition?—and we shall see that at least one of the E poems seems to be a deliberate updating of traditional material for a

sophisticated Constantinopolitan audience in touch with contemporary Western developments. Above all, however it began, the development of Akritic material does not have a clearly marked end. Though Alexiou has proposed that the original E will not have post-dated the sack of Constantinople by the Franks in 1204, there is no compelling reason to assume that this grievous blow affected the transmission (and, inevitably, the adaptation) of earlier literature. As for the new wave of Western- style romances that consigned old figures like Akrites to relative obscurity for centuries, this does not prevail till the fourteenth century.

Linguistic and stylistic criteria will get us no further with the precise dating of the surviving Byzantine heroic poetry: the state of our texts (and the paucity of other texts in the vernacular) is not such as to permit specificity. Twelfth- and thirteenth-century vernacular poetry is written in a linguistic medium which can be anything from apparently oral-traditional diction on the one hand (E or its imitation in the Ptochoprodromika: see Alexiou 1985: ραβ') to a learned diction heavily influenced by ecclesiastical texts. All our MSS, moreover, are of later date.

Should we therefore dismiss the 'traditionalist' hypothesis altogether? There is still room for a more measured form of this approach than was espoused by Grégoire. In the first place, study of the diction and versification of E (and this applies also to *Armoures*) has now shown that it exhibits, if not a formular system of Homeric complexity, at least a deeply traditional base which many writers have left intact (Prombonas 1985; Fenik). As our knowledge of the techniques of heroic poetry has increased, we need no longer avoid comparisons of Byzantine heroic poetry with modern Greek folk song as being inevitably subjective: the similarities between the two genres derive from their common origins in the oral poetry of the Byzantine period. *Armoures*, as we shall see, reflects these common origins rather more than most of E, in which there is a greater complexity; but it remains the case that any learned literary sources used in E are very much an overlay, grafting an extra detail or a fashionable reference onto the tradition.

Clearly—even if we accept that E and *Armoures* are composed in a polished but traditional medium—there are problems in attributing *specific* features of these texts to traditional material. What was the traditional material? Here again a change of perspective, a revisionist 'traditionalism', is in order. The much-quoted comment of Bishop Arethas of Caesarea at the beginning of the tenth century will bear quoting again: he writes of 'the accursed Paphlagonians [presumably Cappadocians] who

have composed certain odes containing the adventures of glorious men and who sing them for a penny from house to house.' (Kougeas 1912/13: 239) Now *what* these men sang and how they sang it will, like the pre-Homeric poems, be forever the subject of speculation, but certain inferences may be made on the basis of what we actually possess.

It is true that 'traditionalist' scholarship has tended to posit a source for practically everything in a poem, and there is no reason in the case of E specifically to assume that what we have is a selection or compilation from a huge mass of material relating to Akrites. Though the material at the disposal of the compiler has been reduced to a biographical order, it is one with ellipses, particularly with regard to what has normally been described as the hero's greatest achievement, the subjugation of the *apelatai*. Nor is it the case that lost lays are to be seen behind the material we have: only E 1709–14 appear to summarize such a lay. Many short lays of the Byzantine period have evidently been lost; some survive in the modern folk tradition ('The Sons of Andronikos' etc); but we cannot infer from these much about Byzantine heroic poetry itself. What can we suggest about the materials used by the composers of the E poems?

The first thing we have to go on—the clearest and the most significant—is the interrelations between the poems we have: having sketched these in this section of the Introduction I shall return to them in the introductory notes and the Notes. As it is, the combination of E plus *Armoures* presents us with several layers of development, ranging from the short popular lay to a sophisticated romantic *epyllion*. Extrapolating back from the poems themselves, we find the following types of influence:

1. Traditional material, antiquarian or folkloric (the modern Greek παραδόσεις), from the Eastern borders.

2. Traditional lays which end with a statement by the hero: 'Akrites among the Raiders' is one such, 'Exploits of Akrites' a development of one.

3. Ecclesiastical texts, from simple tags to sustained allusions. (Some of the latter seem to be late additions, even interpolations.)

4. Ancient or Hellenistic texts—but only in the 'Romance of Akrites' and the 'Retirement and Death of Akrites', and subject to a number of qualifications.

5. A particular type of evidence (Grégoire 1975: XVIII; L. Politis 1975: 576–9) is provided by the modern Greek folk songs. In the case of one poem, they provide evidence for its synthesis out of earlier elements.

It is important to clarify this claim for the use of folk song. The traditional view, among Greek writers in particular, has been that such songs have changed very little over the centuries, and represent a stable channel of folk tradition running parallel to any literary developments (Kakridis 1979). This view has been challenged (Beaton 1980) with the argument that the songs we have, recorded, for the most part, since 1800, cannot be used as evidence of what the Byzantine poets had at their disposal. Certainly, it would be naive to hold that the songs have not developed in oral tradition; but what if some of our songs derive ultimately from a *MS tradition*? The Cypriot song of 'Azgouris' preserves many of the important features of *Armoures* in plot and even style (Academy 1962: 64–51); even the complex Renaissance tragedy by George Chortatses, *Erophile*, has given rise to folk songs in Crete which derive from recitals of a MS or cheap printed edition (Detorakis 1976: 98–103). Now that an obsession with 'pure' oral tradition is in perspective (M. Alexiou 1984/5), the likelihood can be acknowledged that the preservation of Akritic material in song in certain parts of the Greek world is due to MS transmission (many MSS will have been lost, and some, presumably, from after our latest one of 1670). The folk poet makes something new out of any such material—but the broad lines of the substratum material may be discernible in the song, however it may be adulterated with later folk motifs (Saunier 1972; 1979).

We come, then, rather later than might have been expected, to the question of Byzantine heroic poetry's relation to historical circumstances, events and personages. The reason for postponing the question was to emphasize that the poems themselves have primacy. This is not to deny that heroic poetry in its nature derives from a real historical setting—but what is the nature of that derivation? Here the two opposing views are most clearly stated by, on the one hand, Mavrogordato, with his declaration that Digenes Akrites is a symbolic hero in a symbolic setting (1956: lxxiii), and, on the other, by Grégoire's claim that those 'individualists' who underestimate the real historical elements do so because they are pure philologists acquainted with the historical background only through handbooks (1975: XIX, 543).

Basing his view on G, which is a romance, if a strange one, Mavrogordato was right implicitly to draw a distinction between it and the Western *chansons de geste*. But E contains all manner of place-names, personal names, elements of local colour and military terms smoothed over or omitted in G, and reveals more clearly its origins in a

specific locale (*pace* Oikonomidès 1975); as for any real symbolism in the hero's name or identity, E is lacking. But to acknowledge that items from real life and real events lie behind the poems is not to argue that the poets to whom we owe the poems were any more historically-minded than Grégoire's pure philologists. Even if e.g. E 723–35 reflects a knowledge of the chronographers, that knowledge is not deployed in any way for its own sake: there is no undertaking faithfully to record historical events. Similarly, if a Saracen is named as Soudales (928), that is no indication that the poet was compiling information from earlier sources (though see the Glossary): it is rather a bit of local colour to give apparent authenticity. The fact that local elements have survived, it is true, has consequences not just for our view of the poems' origins—they are not simply the products of the study, nor are they self-consciously fictional and even fantastic like the romances proper—but for our approach to them as poems. (Even the strangest elements introduced, like the manly Maximou, appear to have an Eastern flavour.) And yet we should remember the famous example of how Roland becomes the nephew of Charlemagne: what can we say about the heroes of our poems, Armoures and Digenes Akrites?

The identification of Armoures with a historical personage (Alexiou 1985: 164–7) has little enough to tell us about the Lay itself. But the issue, who was the 'real' Digenes Akrites is a less tractable one, for this can never have been anyone's name. *Akrites* is a term to translate the Latin *limitaneus*, 'man of the borders'. Right through the Roman Empire, these men had occupied an important but unofficial role on the eastern frontier areas: their task was at once to repel incursions and to deal with banditry. (In the poems, the *apelatai* are treated more or less as bandits, though there is evidence for their having been, at some periods at least, locally recruited irregulars. The latter of course does not preclude a rivalry between them and the *akritai* such as the poems presuppose.) No doubt, some of the *akritai* were able to climb socially through a good mariage (Huxley 1974): some such ultimate origin may lie behind Akrites' carrying off the general's daughter. It appears, moreover, that an *akrites*, by the eleventh century, was a commander with a fortification—something, then, higher up than an irregular soldier—but this factual background has remarkably little to do with the poetry (Oikonomidès 1975: 386, 395). Above all, the poems treat of the deeds of a *single* Akrites, whose title is not explained (therefore indicating that its meaning is somehow understood; *pace* Beaton 1987) but is none the less

unhistorical: of course there was more than one *akrites*. In putting forward this particular hero as the incarnation of all 'akritic' qualities, these poems betray an attitude which must post-date the collapse of 1071. What of the name Digenes? The symbolism of the epithet, meaning as it must here 'one of double ancestry', has not been lost on commentators—but it is never developed in E. In the 'Lay of the Emir' we can fit it to the particular circumstances of the hero's mixed race, and it is likely that the familiar combination 'Digenes Akrites' takes root in the poetry only when Akrites has come to be understood as a proper name belonging to the particular young man whose birth is told in the 'Lay of the Emir'. As for his baptismal name, Basil, it is rarely used at all.

The point cannot be made too forcibly: Akrites is a symbolic hero. He is not a hero, like the Cid, whose real-life activities are documented: to search for his historical origins is as fruitless as to search for the real origins of the Lone Ranger. This analogy is not made in jest. The Texas Rangers were a real, but semi-official, institution, like the *akritai*, and perhaps in comparable circumstances, and in English the term Ranger has the same spirit of doughty resistance against the incursors. Although when he made his first appearance on radio in 1933 the Lone Ranger was kitted out with a birthdate (1850) and a surname (Reid) it was his symbolic possibilities that led him to spread to 400 radio stations, the movies and television. At each turn the character was revised, in ways which do not reflect the historical actuality of the Texas Rangers. The important thing to note is the element of nostalgia: although the Lone Ranger as we have him may owe something to frontier legends, his popularity is conditioned by the psychological needs of a new era. What these psychological needs were in the case of Akrites and the Byzantines is less easy to establish, but Beaton (1989) is surely right to stress a sense of loss about the Eastern part of the empire. At any rate, we must be careful to discriminate between our specimens of Byzantine heroic poetry as much in terms of their relation to historical events as in other ways: there is not a historical background to the poems collectively.

Armoures might be a symbol of a real treaty and/or intermarriage between Christians and Muslims, but the historical background is in no way dense, and the presentation not far from folk tale. So too with 'Akrites among the Raiders': while it presents a setting which may be authentic, the accomplishments of the *apelatai* do not differ from those of bandits at any period; the story celebrates a generalized heroism in a timeless setting rather than attempting to preserve the memory of

particular deeds. The 'Exploits of Akrites' are tall tales (perhaps of a specifically local origin, it is true; but no place is specified), and a supernatural heroine is the centre-piece. The 'Retirement and Death of Akrites', again, is a symbolic setting in which are embedded one or two bits of apparently traditional material. The 'Romance of Akrites', though it has enough of the old spirit it shares with the ballads of the Scottish Borders, concentrates neoteristically on the couple, and includes one or two historical-sounding indications simply to convey the flavour of authenticity, given that it depends, as the proem makes plain, on the 'Lay of the Emir'. It is indeed only the 'Lay of the Emir' (see Huxley 1974: 317–27), that relates to a historical time and place with something approaching the closeness that we find in the *Cid*.

In the 'Romance of Akrites', a name such as Soudales is not to be taken as a perhaps random nugget of historical reality as it underlay the story (the poet's claim to veracity is a general one) but rather as a conscious attempt by the poet to impart a distinct 'Roman' and, beyond that, eastern flavour to the events he describes: in doing so he hopes to create a work which will differ from western romances, especially those on ancient themes. In The 'Lay of the Emir', by contrast, we have a wealth of traditional historical material such as we find in no other of the poems, something we could crudely measure simply by the number of proper names, and especially place-names. (Though we significantly seem to lack specific information about where the Emir's bride was carried off from; and, less surprisingly, a modern sense of chronology is absent.) One or two features of this background, in so far as it is artistically significant, will be discussed in the introductory note to the 'Lay of the Emir': for the moment it is worth pointing out that (if we except the stereotypic Saracens of, principally, *Armoures*) only in the 'Lay of the Emir' are we in any way aware of religious differences and conflict as such. And yet this Christian-Muslim conflict has traditionally been seen as constitutive of this heroic *genre*.

Once again we come up against irreducibly different features of the poems as we have them in E. The poems, as we shall see, differ not just in style—this could be accounted for by their varying subject matter—but in substance, even if it is clear that they are in some way related. It is true that the very idea of collecting existing heroic poetry of an 'Akritic' type and laying it end to end had the seeds of a biography of Akrites (such as we find later, if imperfectly, in G); but what we have in E is not the biography, even a fictional one, of Akrites. No Turoldus or Per Abbat—

let alone a Homer—has reduced the material to a whole: each of the poems has an essential brevity.

An alternative model is to hand: it is the Codex Regius of the *Elder Edda*. In that MS 29 poems belonging to mythological and heroic cycles of much older origin were assembled in the thirteenth century by a careful scribe who was aware that they were related but separate. As W.P. Ker remarked, 'It is possible for the human mind to imagine an editor, a literary man, capable of blending the poems in order to make a larger book.' But, he went on,

> The poems . . . assert themselves as individual and separate works. They are not the mere makings of an epic, the mere materials ready to the hand of an editor. It still remains true that they are the work of artists, and of a number of artists with different aims and ideals. (Ker 1922: 156)

The truth of this in the case of the Byzantine heroic poems will, I hope, be borne out in this book by the presentation of the texts and the comments on them. But it is perhaps worth concluding this section of the Introduction with a new attempt at a stemma for the poems in the light of the view proposed. This table is intended to do no more than to indicate how a given poem may form part of the presuppositions of another one. The main point to note is the development from material reflecting something close to the original akritic milieu to the *embedding* of such material in later poetry written for a different sort of audience and indeed society.

'Armoures' (single episode, more 'oral' style; no akritic connection, but about east/west conflict)

↓

'The Lay of the Emir' (developed bipartite narrative with some historical basis in east/west conflict; the origin of the name Digenes)

↓

'The Romance of Akrites' (conscious sequel to the 'Lay of the Emir' featuring the son; exclusion of traditional akritic material in favour of love)

'Akrites among the Raiders' (single episode, more 'oral' style, basic akritic material)

↓

'Exploits of Akrites' (a traditional tale of Maximou, bound in with other border material in a sophisticated narrative)

↵ ↓

'The Retirement and Death of Akrites' (some akritic material embedded in a largely symbolic account of a homiletic type)

(The Turkish 'epic', *Dede Korkut* (Bryer 1987) may be adduced as an analogy: it relates obscure events in central Asia around the tenth century; by the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries this material exists in ballads of the Turkmens in north-east Anatolia; and these ballads are in turn joined together, rather loosely, in the fifteenth century.)

(v) Any lengthy remarks on the style of Byzantine heroic poetry would be out of place here: this edition aims simply to present the poems, the style of which admirably speaks for itself on the whole. The task of discussing questions of style belongs to other studies, and it has in large measure been carried out in Fenik's excellent discussions of verse structure and scene-building. What I offer here is in no sense a description of the style but rather some suggestions which may help the reader to identify significant stylistic features that are common to all the poems. (Comments on the differing styles of each poem will be found in the individual introductory notes; the Notes deal with particular stylistic points with narrative implications.) Here for convenience I take cases from a sample (912–86) largely free of MS corruption, but the points apply *mutatis mutandis* elsewhere.

The metre is the so-called unrhymed 'political verse', the staple of Greek poetry since the twelfth century, and it is employed in these poems with a facility and harmony that indicate long practice, if not necessarily in writing. The verse consists of fifteen syllables, with eight in the first hemistich before a strong caesura and seven after; behind each line we can generally feel four strong stresses, e.g. 912:

καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκατεπήδησε | τὴν χαμηλὴν θυρίδαν

Though the metre is basically iambic, sensitivity about stresses on the third and eleventh syllables is not always marked, e.g. the common formula (990 etc):

. . . τὸν ὁ κόσμος οὐκ ἔχει.

Certain stylistic features go hand in hand with the metre. In the first place, enjambement is rare: even e.g. 923–5 lack syntactic complexity. (But cf. 929–30.) Each verse tends toward being a unit of sense, with a paratactic style dominant: a very high proportion of sentences begins with καί. Within verses, furthermore, we often find a break of sense at the

caesura, e.g. 916, with its characteristic asyndeton and change of tense:

καὶ ἐπίασαν τὴν στράταν τους, | χαιράμενοι ὑπαγαίνουν.

Or a line may form an ascending tricolon (947):

φωνιάζουν καὶ ἀνταρεύγονται καὶ ταραχὰς σηκώνουν.

There is little point in taking features of diction in isolation: only the context can tell us how they function. The diction of Byzantine heroic poetry is 'mixed', as we perhaps anachronistically call it, in that, depending on the context, it takes words from different registers. The most striking general feature is the repetition of formulas, but with enough variations to show that formulas are not simply used, either as a dictation of an authentic oral performance, or as crutches for a flagging inspiration. Take 918 and 982: the reader supplies a different tone to each statement in establishing how the story has come on, through the understanding of a pun which cannot be captured in translation. Again, a repetition may carry anger and excitement (921) or a sense of penitence (954); or the balance between two verses may express with the greatest compression the narrative situation (926–7).

Direct speech is abundant, often rhetorically pointed (957–60) or colloquial (922), but typically brief. So too are the descriptions of persons (945) and indeed the few similes (923–5, 966–8): the overriding aim of the narrator is to keep a sense of motion. Assonant chiming of sound is much more prevalent than elaborate puns and wordplay; florid compound epithets are relatively rare.

Taking as a touchstone Arnold's characterization of Homer's style as rapid, plain, simple and noble, we may assert, above all, that the style of Byzantine heroic poetry is rapid. One reason why it rewards many rereadings is that it characteristically takes up and drops a point in order not to disrupt the flow: many cases of this reticent, even elliptical, and at its best pregnant, style are pointed out in the Notes. Plainness is there in the broad absence of sustained learned language (except in religious contexts) and the unwillingness to milk set pieces and special effects: contrast the accomplished but obsessive punning of Ptochoprodromos or some of the later romances. The simplicity rests in the use of simple metrical or thematic building blocks used for verses, sections and scenes (as Fenik shows). As for nobility, this is perhaps lacking in the conception of all the

poems, though many parts are grand and impressive. At its best, however, this poetry exploits its traditional, four-square idiom in ways that, if rarely noble, are unembroidered, pointed, humorous and astute.

THE LAY OF THE EMIR

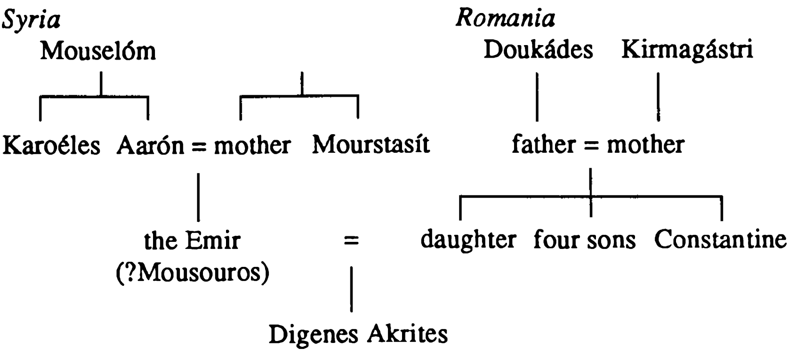
This is a self-contained poem of some sophistication consisting originally of about 670 lines (with about the first 70 missing in E)—a scale larger than that of any of the other component parts of E. The basic story is simple. An Emir sacks a 'Roman' province and carries off the daughter of a notable; her brothers catch up with him, and one of them defeats him in a duel; but he then agrees, for love of the girl, to turn Christian and live 'in the land of the Romans' with her, where they produce a son of mixed birth (Digenes). In the second part of the poem, this happy state of affairs is threatened by the intervention of the Emir's mother, who accuses him of deserting her and dishonouring his family by his apostasy. He incurs the suspicions of his wife's brothers by going back to Syria to visit his mother, but manages to persuade her to come and live in Romania too; and so the conflict between the two great families of different religions is resolved.

It is worth noting that in this poem Akrites himself is virtually absent: his role is essentially to cement the marriage between the Emir and the Roman general's daughter, to form a bone of contention between the Emir and his mother, and eventually, to incarnate the reconciliation. His akritic attributes beyond the mere name, moreover, are dwelt on only in a short linking passage which looks rather like an addition made by the first compiler of the proto-E collection in an effort to tie the 'Lay of the Emir' in with the other episodes. Evidently the new vogue for Akrites created an interest in gathering related material, and the 'Lay of the Emir' was saved for poetry by its inclusion in the collection.

The poem treats of a more serious subject—religious, racial and family conflict—than any of the others, and it does so in a way which shows a mastery of the material. If it is here, and only here in the E poems, that questions of historical background and content loom large, this is for compelling artistic reasons. The premise that *amor vincit omnia* needs no explanation, but the conflict which is at the heart of this carefully

structured poem needs fleshing out with the contrasting beliefs, customs and loyalties of the two parties, standing as they do for two different worlds. As with *Roland* and the *Cid*, if on a smaller scale, the result was distinguished poetry.

The relative complexity of the poem's constituents (which may rest in part on authentic historical elements; but see below) may be shown by a family tree of the persons mentioned in the poem:



Both sides are distinguished in war, so the young Digenes Akrites will be not just a borderer between the two but also the possessor of the distinctive valour which comes from being on the borders.

It is notable that our evidence for the personal and place names comes not from the narrator but from the speeches in the poem, and this sheds some light on the question of historicity. The attitude of the poet is not historical in the sense in which ours is. There is little reason to doubt that G preserves on broad lines what was at the beginning of the 'Lay of the Emir' in E, and there the poet does not set out the relations of the two families in the manner of a chronicler. Furthermore, though in its present context the Emir story is aetiological in the sense that it explains the origins of the current vogue figure, Digenes Akrites, it has, perhaps surprisingly, no tie to the present. At the end of the poem, the arrival of the Emir with his family and retinue to settle in Christendom has the look of a foundation myth, but this is never developed: the interest was not so much in what was bounded by time and place as in the perennial power of love. The difficulties faced by love in this case were both specific and contingent, which is why nearly all the place names from the Muslim world appear in the speeches of the Emir's mother. But this specificity in

the mouths of the characters, giving an authentic ring, is accompanied by great vagueness about the Roman side: what is the bride's name? where do the couple live? The historical elements that we identify mark sets of *connotations* rather than specific places, let alone times; and this is how the referentiality of the poem is to be understood. The name 'Aaron', for example, *evokes* Harun ar Rashid (eighth century) without licensing the inference that the life of his 'son' the Emir is understood as falling in that historical period. Nor, on the other hand, does the mention of the Assassins' Syrian activities (twelfth century on) indicate the real period of the events narrated. Nor, again, are the invasions catalogued by the Emir's mother at 254–63 necessarily compatible with a single phase of time.

The 'Lay of the Emir' builds out of folk memory, but also evidently out of more detailed knowledge, a timeless picture of the Muslim world to set against a Christendom which requires only minimal definition because the poet's audience is Christian. Such an anachronistic synthesis is not what we would call historical, but it is presented with care: we do not find the extraordinary jumble that we find in e.g. these lines from Hermoniakos (N.G. Politis 1909a: 53):

> φέρει στράτευμα Βουλγάρων
> Οὔγγρων τε καὶ Μυρμιδόνων.

The 'Lay of the Emir' is by contrast artistically persuasive: two authentic, if temporally undefined, worlds are set against each other in a way which is compelling and self-conscious. In two respects we may even describe the aims and attainments as Homeric. In the first place, the proportion of direct speech (368 out of 609 surviving verses) is notably high: the conflict is as much articulated by the participants as it is told. Secondly, this poem of conflict presupposes and indeed embeds (see 500–12), but also distances itself from a tradition of uncomplicated heroism.

AKRITES AMONG THE RAIDERS

This poem requires little enough comment: we are the opposite end of the spectrum of literary sophistication. The poem is best explained (Beaton 1989: 33–4) as an undigested *cantilène* incompatible in plot with the rest of E. The poem tells of the hero's first meeting with the *apelatai*, which is

also related in what I have called 'Exploits of Akrites'. In his more coherent narrative, the author of G tackles the incompatibility by removing the episode altogether: that the compiler of proto-E did not is an indication that he saw himself, not as compiling a unitary work, but as gathering a collection of related poems in, as far as possible, biographical order.

The emphasis here is on rugged humour as the hero defeats the proverbial old trickster Philopappous and his men and concludes with a punch-line. The style is more formulaic than that of the other E poems—it is a reasonable inference that this 80-verse composition is closest to the original oral tradition—and the action perfunctory. What we have is an expression, in a single episode, of the heroic attitude at its rawest, and something, perhaps, of the real frontier ethos. This incarnation of Akrites, significantly, is socially backgroundless—just a representative of the collective *akritai*—and, for example, plays at village staves where the Akrites of the Romance derides villagers's pursuits. Only a late and perfunctory linking passage, relegated by Alexiou to an appendix, makes any effort to embed the story in a biography of the hero.

THE ROMANCE OF AKRITES

This poem is deceptively complex and allusive. While its subject matter is more light-hearted than that of the 'Lay of the Emir', we can see from the table on p. 14 that the 'Romance of Akrites' is tied into a more complex web of reference. The poem tells the story of how Akrites carried off his bride, and it is the earliest surviving romance in vernacular Greek. The *apelatai* who are the traditional enemies of Akrites are deliberately excluded from this poem; and the poet even teases the reader with a hint at an earlier version in which they tried to carry off Akrites' bride after her abduction by him. (Also with St Theodore described as 'the great *apelates*' at 891.) Bride-snatching (ἁρπαγή), which in 'Digenes among the Raiders' is understood to be the stealing away of *someone else's* bride, has here been brought to fit the model of the 'Lay of the Emir' in which the hero carries off his own bride for love—though here the bride is allowed to display more independence.

That the poem is self-sufficient is shown by its initial summary of the 'Lay of the Emir'—which is not in the formulaic recapitulatory style of *Armoures*—and by its ring-form based on the current notion of Eros (see

E. Jeffreys 1983). The proem declares the poet's intention to write, not about the Hellenes and the Trojan War—his response indicates a contemporary vogue for the romances of antiquity and Homeric myth—but about a hero of the Christian era. Although the Akrites here is clearly a stage of development on from the one who appears in the 'Exploits', he is still, in a sense, a stage behind the heroes of the later romances. In the first place, we have an asymmetry: although Akrites is modern in carrying off a willing bride (his mother, when carried off by the Emir, was never consulted as to her wishes) the romance does not show the equipollence between hero and heroine which is palpable in the titles of many of the romances. Furthermore, the new romantic guise of Akrites does not exclude from his behaviour a sort of roughness which was uncongenial to a collector of this lay: the original ending, in which the bride's father is simply snubbed, has been supplemented by a typical added coda to the lay in which the general is seen as happily conveying gifts to the wedding. Here we find at work the biographizing tendency which wishes to subdue Akrites to the norms of the ideal family.

The playful and allusive sophistication of this poem can be demonstrated both in its broad lines (despite the lacuna in the middle) and in many of its details, some of which are pointed out in the Notes here. The proem makes clear the extent to which the poet is updating the 'Lay of the Emir' to the case of the Emir's son, and in doing so distancing the latter from his traditional akritic behaviour, such as the hero himself narrates in 'Exploits of Akrites'. Both poems relate the hero's youthful love, but in very different ways. As Ker observed of the Edda (1922: 156): 'the poet of *Atlamal*, for whom *Atlakviða* was a classic, strenuously sought for originality by exploring a contrasting mode.' In his new guise, Akrites could combine the old heroism with a new fidelity.

EXPLOITS OF AKRITES

This poem appears at first sight to be a slightly rambling assemblage of traditional exploits. In fact, however, the narrative that we possess is of some ingenuity, and its main flaw is its corrupt beginning, which we should probably be ready to reject if it fits so poorly with the bulk of the narrative, which in general has been left largely unharmed by monkish revisions. (Unlike, especially, the 'Lay of the Emir', the story is as a whole so unedifying to Christian sensibilities that there was little point in

making interpolations.) The poet makes a witty attempt at weaving a number of exploits—perhaps the bulk of the exploits known to traditional lays— round Akrites and his girl; the girl forms the narrative backbone as she provokes the successive attacks of ogre, lion, *apelatai* and finally Maximou.

The narration is in the first person, perhaps suggesting origins in a distinct genre (Alexiou 1985: ριβ' n. 191); but as the beginning has been lost it is hard to be certain. With the first-person narration comes a quite different ethos from that of the 'Romance of Akrites': after having his way with the defeated Maximou, Akrites reports back to his wife with a no doubt proverbial punch-line (1596–8); husband and wife enjoy the joke together. This ethos may well be connected with the preponderance of eastern material; and the clear and elaborate detail of the fighting scenes appears to reflect traditional (oral) material. However, one cannot exclude conscious exoticism by a poet wishing to satisfy buffs of the Wild East.

THE RETIREMENT AND DEATH OF AKRITES

The final section of E treats of the retirement and then the (natural) death of Akrites: he builds a castle and a bridge in which he sets his tomb, and then (for reasons not explained) dies. Alexiou's edition treats the two elements as separate, but I doubt if this can be correct: although the corresponding sections even of G are somewhat perfunctory, the *ekphrasis* of the castle there has some point, while in the E version it stands alone and disproportionately brief; furthermore, the mention of the hero's tomb cannot but be placed here in order to lead on to the hero's death. Cautious recourse to the evidence of modern Greek folk song may confirm this view. The Pontic versions of the death of Akritas (as he is called there) have the hero building his castle and garden; the birds in the garden warn him of impending death; and then Charos comes to take him. This song, with Charos apparently a later development (Saunier 1979: 326–33), is to be seen, it is to be stressed, not as an extant prototype of the written poem, but as a reflection, however abbreviated and distorted, of a manuscript tradition of it. (That popular tradition can be surprisingly faithful to a MS is shown by the Cypriot song of Azgourís, which is surprisingly close to the 'Lay of Armoures'.) In other words, the Pontic version preserves, if not the language or even the attitude, at least the

broad framework on which the poem of the 'Retirement and Death' was woven. It is worth quoting it in full accordingly (Academy 1962: 43–4):

> Akritas set to build a castle and Akritas set to build a garden
> in a level place, in a meadow, in a suitable place.
> All the plants of the world he brings there and plants them,
> all the vines of the world he brings there and plants them,
> and all the waters of the world he brings there and irrigates it,
> and all the birds of the world go there and nest.
> They always used to warble and say 'Akritas will live long.'
> But one morning, early morning and on a Lord's day
> they started to warble and say, 'Tomorrow Akritas dies.'
> His loved one was sore at heart and makes a deep groan:
> 'Do you hear, do you hear, my Akritas, what the birds are saying?
> They always used to warble and say, "Akritas will live long"
> but now they warble and say, "Akritas will die".'
> My Akritas hears this, laughs and says:
> 'They are little birds, they speak and do not understand.
> Let the silly things warble and rejoice;
> but bring me my bow, that draws three hundred cubits,
> and the other little one, that draws sixty-five.
> Bring my hunting dogs that are chained up
> and let me go and hunt in the hunting places,
> and if I find anything to hunt, then I will not die,
> but if there is no bird to hunt then truly I will die.'
> Akritas goes to hunt in the hunting places.
> He hunted, he hunted, he found no quarry anywhere,
> he found not even a little bird to hunt.
> Charos met him at the crossroads.
> 'Where are you going, where are you going, my Charos, that you are so joyful?'
> 'I am coming for you, and that is why I am joyful.'
> 'Charos, what business do you have with me that you follow me always,
> and if I sit, you sit with me, and if I walk, you follow me,
> and if I lie down to sleep, you become my pillow?
> My name is Akritas, invincible Akritas.'
> 'Hush, hush, Akritas, do not make a great boast.
> The one who sent me for you is a greater brave than you.'

'But come, let us wrestle on the bronze threshing floor,
and if you defeat me, take my soul and go,
but if I defeat you, I shall take your black horse.'
They went and wrestled and Charos won.
'Charos, take silver and gold, as much as you want,
and, if you like, my horse which the king himself lacks,
take my bow that draws three hundred cubits,
take my hunting dogs, take whatever you want.'
'The one who sent me had no thought of such things;
he told me simply: take his soul and come!'
Akritas groaned and went to his loved one:
'Alas for luckless me, I shall die!
Let the high rocks and the plateaux rejoice.
Go in, my loved one, and lay my deathbed;
place flowers at my head and blooms from the plateau,
place flowers for mattresses and scented pillows.'
His loved one went in and strewed flowers and blooms.

In style and scope, of course, the Pontic song differs greatly from the poem of E; but there are significant common features. The *locus amoenus*, even in the song's more homespun way (but with some of the same details), exemplifies the frailty of human endeavour; above all, retirement is seen as the harbinger of death for a hero.

The poem contains a blend of elements beyond this, of course, and no poem of the E collection is so easy to analyse into the parts of which it has been made; but for this very reason our conclusions about the version originally included in the collection must be tentative. The strongly Christian element may have entered with the very idea of writing a poem about the hero's death, and the final, and to some extent separable part (1794ff) relegated by Alexiou to an appendix, though its learned language and versification are obtrusive, is not necessarily inauthentic: the whole episode is a set piece on *vanitas vanitatum* which has much in common with the didactic poem, the *Spaneas* (?13th century). But it is clear enough that, whenever they came together, we are dealing with three layers.

First we have the archetypal Akrites in retirement, telling of his deeds and declaring to his men that there will never be another Akrites. This aspect (with quite enough in it that it could have formed an independent lay) is preserved in a Euboean folk song collected before the written

versions were discovered (which preserves the references to Arabia and the claims to lone bravery; Academy 1962: 36–7) and, perhaps most closely, in this version from Syme (Academy 1962: 38), which conflates the scene with the angel of death and the hero's telling of old exploits:

> Digenes is in his death-throes and the earth trembles at him,
> and the tombstone shudders at how it will lay him to rest.
> The nobles learned of it and go to see him.
> He pulls up some chairs and sits them down and pours them sweet wine.
> 'Eat, drink, nobles, and I shall tell you a tale.
> Who is it who went round the mountains of Egypt
> and the hills of Alexandria at the hour of noon?
> I slew forty bears and eighteen lions.
> I was never afraid until that hour
> when I saw Charos naked, Lios [Elijah?] fully armed
> and the Archangel Michael girt with three swords:
> one for the poor, the other for nobles
> and the third, the deadly one, for the valiant.'

Secondly we have the romantic Akrites as husband addressing his wife. This is made the overriding emphasis in G and in some folk songs, and it clearly connects with the 'Romance' and the 'Exploits' of Akrites; in one folk song from Crete we find that the theme of the wife's remarriage after the hero's death is at the centre (Academy 1962: 37–8).

Finally, we have an overlay of Christian reflection on the vanity of heroism and achievement which has marked affinities with the way in which the death of Alexander is presented in the Alexander Romance. (The latter, with its ecumenical claims, has doubtless influenced the picture of Akrites which we find here; see especially the reference to Chosroes.) The thing may have been done with scissors and paste, but it still presents sufficient incompatibilities and traditional elements that we may rule out its having been composed *ab initio* for the collection.

THE LAY OF ARMOURES

Armoures narrates with some compression the story of how the bravery of the youthful Arestes, son of Armoures, leads to the freeing of his father

from imprisonment in Syria and the betrothal of the young hero to the Emir's daughter. A single memorable episode is combined with an admirably flowing and uniform style in a way which paves the way for, but is not superseded by, the 'Lay of the Emir'. The names and the locale may have real historical origins (Alexiou 1985: 166), but the presentation is not far from that of folk heroes. The poem, then, survived not just in our two MSS (one datable to 1461) but also, in Cyprus at least, as a narrative song recognizably the same.

Armoures' uniformity and economy of style when compared to the E poems (which I have tried to convey in the translation) does not necessarily admit of a simple or single explanation. Beaton (1980: 82–6) has seen it as reflecting development towards the idiom of the modern demotic songs—in my terms, then, a stage on from the E poems—Alexiou (1985) as a less complex style predating the greater sophistication of the E poems and more or less faithfully preserved by the MSS. Two qualifications may be made to the alternatives thus presented.

The first is that, if the style of *Armoures* is a simpler one than that of E overall, it gives us reason to hope that the MS transmission will have been more faithful, and that we therefore have the poem much as it was originally composed. The second point is that, once we have identified separable poems with distinct styles within E, then *Armoures* may, with greater refinement, be related to these smaller entities. While it is clear, for example, that the 'Lay of the Emir' develops with greater complexity an East-West conflict of a similar type, it is clear, too, that 'Akrites among the Raiders' narrates in a similar and clearly 'oral' style an episode of youthful might which is if anything rather more primitive. At any rate, *Armoures*, as our only lay not concerning Akrites, has value as a control; but it also has poetic value, and whatever the origins of its style, its effects are impressive. They are such as make us to regret that no other Byzantine lays of this type survive intact.

THE POEMS

TEXT, TRANSLATION AND NOTES

* * *

«Κρότοι καὶ κτύποι καὶ ἀπειλαὶ μὴ σὲ καταπτοήσουν,
μὴ φοβηθῇς τὸν θάνατον παρὰ μητρὸς κατάραν·
μητρὸς κατάραν φύλαττε καὶ μὴ πληγὰς καὶ πόνους.
Καὶ μέλη ἂν σὲ ποιήσουσιν, βλέπε ἐντροπὴν μὴ ποιήσῃς· 4
τοὺς πέντε ἂς μᾶς φονεύσουσιν καὶ τότε ἂς τὴν ἐπάρουν. 6
Μόνον προθύμως ἔξελθε εἰς τοῦ ἀμιρᾶ τὴν τόλμην·
τὰ δύο σου χέρια φύλαττε καὶ ὁ Θεὸς νὰ μᾶς βοηθήσῃ.»
Καβαλικεύει ὁ ἀμιράς, εἰς αὖτον ὑπαγαίνει.
Φαρὶν ἐκαβαλίκευσεν φιτυλὸν καὶ ἀστεράτον· 10
ὀμπρὸς εἰς τὸ μετώπιν του χρυσὸν ἀστέραν εἶχεν,

ABBREVIATIONS

LE	The Lay of the Emir	AR	Akrites among the Raiders
RA	The Romance of Akrites	EA	Exploits of Akrites
RDA	The Retirement and Death of Akrites	ARM	Armoures
A	S. Alexiou 1985	MG	Modern Greek

The Lay of the Emir

There was once an Emir of great valour. With his Arabian troops he overran the land of the Romans and took many prisoners, including the beautiful daughter of an exiled general. The girl's mother wrote to her sons, who were absent at the time, exhorting them to get the girl back or else be cursed by herself. The brothers resolved to do or die, and went off to find the Emir at his camp in a mountain pass. They came to him and begged him to ransom their sister. The Emir refused, suggesting instead a duel with one of the brothers to settle the question. The lot fell on the youngest brother, Constantine, and the eldest brother advised him:

'Let not din and blows and threats affright you;
fear not death but a mother's curse;
guard against a mother's curse and not against wounds and pain.
4 Even if they cut you into pieces be sure not to shame yourself;
6 let them slay all five of us and take her then.
No, go out eagerly against the Emir's daring;
guard your two hands, and may God be with us.'
The Emir mounted and went against him.
10 He rode a steed dappled and starred:
in front, on its forehead, it had a gold star;

The preface given is a summary, based on G 1.30–133 (whose account here is expanded, no doubt, but broadly unobjectionable), of what is lost at the beginning of the MS—probably some 70 verses. E 405 supplies the information about the mountain pass.

10–17: Characteristic of this heroic poetry is the description, not of persons (contrast florid examples in the later romances) but of the possessions which lend them their status and character; EA 1486ff is the most elaborate and purposeful case in the E poems.

τὰ τέσσερά του ὀνύχια ἀργυροτσάπωτα ἦσαν,
καλιγοκάρφια ὁλάργυρα ἦτον καλιγωμένον,
ἡ οὐρά του σμυρνωμένη ἦτον μὲ τὸ μαργαριτάριν·
πρασινορόδινος ἀετός 's τὴν σέλαν ἐξοπίσω,
καὶ ἰσκιάζει τὰς κουτάλας του ἐκ τοῦ ἥλιου τὰς ἀκτίνας.
Κοντάριν ἐμαλάκιζε, βένετον, χρυσωμένον.
Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς τοῦτον τὸν λόγον λέγει:
«Εἶμαι ἀπὸ πόλεμον πολὺν καὶ ἀπὸ δοκιμασίας
καὶ πάλιν ἔχω ἀποδοχὴν νὰ ἐπάρω του τὸ νίκος.» 20
Σαρακηνὸς ἐλάλησεν τὸν ἀμιρὰν τῆς γλώσσης:
«Αὐτό, ἀμιρά, μὴ τὸ γελᾶς, μὴ τὸ κατονειδίζης·
ἐγὼ παιδὶν καλὸν θεωρῶ καὶ δυνατὸν πολέμου·
καὶ ἂν ἔχῃ ὁ ἄγουρος καρδίαν γλήγορα νὰ γυρίζῃ,
την τόλμην του τὴν θεωρῶ . . .
νὰ ἐπάρῃ καὶ τὸ ἀδέλφι του καὶ ὅλον μας τὸ κοῦρσος.»
Σαρακηνός ἐλάλησεν τὸν ἀμιρὰν τῆς γλώσσης: 30
«Πίασε, μούλε, τὸν ἄγουρον, ταχέως νὰ τὸν νικήσῃς·
αὐτὸς σκυλὶ Ρωμαῖος ἔν', μὴ σὲ κακοδοικήσῃ!» 29
Εὐθὺς ἐκαβαλίκευσαν, 's τὸν κάμπον κατεβαίνουν· 32
ὡς δράκοντες ἐσύριζαν καὶ ὡς λέοντες ἐβρυχοῦντα
καὶ ὡς ἀετοὶ ἐπέτουντα καὶ ἐσμίξασιν οἱ δύο.
Καὶ τότε νὰ ἰδῇς πόλεμον καλῶν παλληκαρίων
καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς μάχης τῆς πολλῆς κροῦσιν διασυντόμως·
καὶ ἀπὸ τὸν κτύπον τὸν πολὺν καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ δὸς καὶ λάβε,
οἱ κάμποι φόβον εἴχασιν καὶ τὰ βουνιὰ ἀηδονοῦσαν,

Σπεύδει καὶ γὰρ ὁ φθόνος του μὴ καὶ εἰς δειλίαν τὸν φέρῃ

21–29: The sense of these lines as reordered here is perspicuous: the repetition of line 21 as line 30 is a feature of the heroic style found in ARM; here, apart from this traditional flavour, it serves to emphasize the two parts of the Saracen's speech, the breaking of which into two, each part introduced by a *verbum dicendi*, is itself a feature of popular style. The first warns against Constantine's skill and valour; the second makes a practical suggestion—not to give him room for manoeuvre—and a goading into action. The scribe has confused things by the inclusion of a gloss in line 28: the Saracen's motive was not envy, however (he appears here as a bit of local colour, not as an untrustworthy infidel); and his

its four hooves were covered with gold;
it was shod with nails all of silver;
its tail was adorned with pearl.
A green and rosy eagle-pattern cloth was behind the saddle,
and it shaded the horse's curving back from the sun's rays.
He brandished a lance sky-blue and gilded.
And then the Emir spoke thus:
'I come from many a battle and many a sore trial,
but still I expect to take the victory from him.'
A Saracen spoke to the Emir in his own tongue:
'Do not deride him, Emir, do not mock him.
I see a fine boy strong in battle;
and if the lad has the spirit to make a quick turn
I see his daring
taking both his sister and all our plunder.'
30 A Saracen spoke to the Emir in his own tongue:
'*Moula*, get hold of the lad and vanquish him quickly:
29 he is a Roman dog—let him not make sorry work of you.'
32 Straightaway they rode and went down to the field.
They hissed like dragons and roared like lions
and flew like eagles and the two came together.
And then you could see a battle between fine braves,
and in no time a clashing from all the combat.
And from the great din and the cut-and-thrust
the plains were afraid and the mountains quaked;

28 But his envy seeks to make him (the Emir) cowardly.

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realism is borne out by events.

25: We could either supplement this half-verse with something on the lines of καὶ τὴν πολλήν του ἀνδρείαν (cf. e.g. 725) or delete it as a filler picking up line 7 and expanding an original sentence: 'If...then he will/may take (νὰ πάρη)...'.

31: *Moula* = Arabic 'sir', a bit of local colour.

35: 'You could see...': a device to produce immediacy, common in the *Cid* also (e.g. 727).

38–9: The 'pathetic fallacy' reappears in a different mood in RA 1061–2.

τὰ δένδρη ἐξεριζώνοντα καὶ ὁ ἥλιος ἐσκοτίσθη·
τὸ αἷμαν ἐκατέρεεν εἰς τὰ σκαλόλουρά των
καὶ ὁ ἵδρος τους ἐξέβαινεν ἀπάνω ἀπ' τὰ λουρίκια.
Ἦτον καὶ γὰρ τοῦ Κωνσταντῆ γοργότερος ὁ μαῦρος,
καὶ θαυμαστὸς νεώτερος ἦτον ὁ καβαλάρης:
κατέβηκε εἰς τὸν ἀμιρὰν καὶ κρούει του ραβδέα
καὶ ἐχέρισεν ὁ ἀμιρὰς νὰ τρέμη καὶ νὰ φεύγη.
Σαρακηνὸς ἐλάλησεν τὸν ἀμιρὰν τῆς γλώσσης:
«Πίασε, μούλε, τὸν ἄγουρον, ταχέως νὰ τὸν νικήσης,
μὴ εἰς σύντομόν του γύρισμα πάρη τὴν κεφαλήν σου.
Αὐτὸς καλὰ σ' ἐσέβηκεν τώρα νὰ σὲ γκρεμνίση.
Ἐγὼ οὐδὲν τὸ ἐγνοιάζομαι νὰ τὸν καταπονέσης,
ἀλλὰ μὴ τὸ καυχάσεται ὅτι ἔτρεψεν φουσάτα.»
Καὶ ὁ ἀμιρὰς ὡς τὸ ἤκουσεν, μακρέα τὸν ἀποξέβην,
ἔριψεν τὸ κοντάριν του καὶ δάκτυλον τοῦ δείχνει,
καὶ μετὰ τοῦ δακτύλου του τοιοῦτον λόγον λέγει:
«Νὰ ζῇς, καλὲ νεώτερε, ἐδικόν σου ἔναι τὸ νίκος.»
Τὸν λόγον οὐκ ἐπλήρωσεν, ἐστράφη ἐντροπιασμένος,
καὶ ὁ Κωνσταντίνος . . . ὑπάει εἰς τοὺς ἐδικούς του.
Καὶ οἱ πέντε ἐκαβαλίκευσαν, 'ς τὸν ἀμιρὰν ὑπάγουν:
«Ὦ ἀμιρά, πρωταμιρὰ καὶ πρῶτε τῆς Συρίας,
ὦ ἀμιρά, δοῦλε Θεοῦ, πλήρωσον ὡς μᾶς εἶπες,
καὶ δεῖξε μας τὸ ἀδέλφιν μας νὰ χαροῦν οἱ ψυχές μας.»
Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς ψευδόμενος τοὺς λέγει:
«Ἐβγᾶτε εἰς τὰ φουσάτα μου, γυρεύσετε τὰς τέντας
καὶ ἂν εὕρετε τὸ ἀδέλφι σας, εἰς μίαν νὰ σᾶς τὸ δώσω.»

40–1: Compare *Cid* (Such and Hopkinson 1987), 501: 'and blood flows down to my elbow'.

44: Note that Constantine uses a mere club against the Emir's lance (17), a heroic feature inherited by Akrites *passim*.

46: This verse now for the third time: the familiar 'figure of three' in popular poetry.

47: The echo of 31 shows the gravity of the situation: at stake is not the girl or the plunder but the Emir's own head.

49–50: These words are not too encouraging, so it is no surprise that the Emir

the trees were uprooted and the sun was cast into shadow.
Their blood brimmed over stirrup and harness;
and the sweat flowed over their breastplates.
But Constantine's black horse was swifter
and its rider was a wonderful youth:
he came down on the Emir and dealt him a club-blow,
and the Emir started to tremble and take flight.
A Saracen spoke to the Emir in his own tongue:
'*Moula*, get hold of the lad and vanquish him quickly,
lest with a sudden turn he take your head:
just now he made a drive at you to bring you to the ground.
I do not think that you will hurt him—
but let him not boast that he sent an army packing!'
And when the Emir heard this, he went off at a distance,
threw his lance away and showed him the finger,
and with the sign of the finger thus he spoke:
'May you live, good youth: yours is the victory.'
He did not add to these words, but turned away in shame,
and Constantine went to his kin.
And the five of them rode and came to the Emir:
'Emir, foremost Emir and foremost in Syria,
Emir, servant of God, fulfil what you told us,
and show us our sister that our hearts may rejoice.'
But then the Emir said to them falsely:
'Go out among the army; look in the tents;
and if you find your sister I shall give her to you at once.'

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makes the sign of the uplifted finger ('pax').

57: I delete A's supplement, based on G 1.131, ὁ μικρός: Constantine here is not necessarily the exact equivalent of the Mikrokonstantinos of MG folklore (e.g. Academy 1962:70).

60: An appeal to a fellow monotheist; cf. 378–9.

62: Here I read Kalonaros' emendation (following G 1.208) ψευδόμενος for μαινόμενος (E): the corruption is scribally an unsurprising one, and the emphasis on the Emir's trickery will prepare the way for the second part of the story and the brothers' later suspicions.

Καὶ τότε οἱ πέντε ἀδελφοὶ τὰς τέντας ἐγυρεῦσαν,
ἐγύρευσαν καὶ οὐκ ηὗραν την, ἤρξαντο πάλιν κλαίειν.
Σαρακηνὸν ὑπάντησαν ἀπέξωθεν τῆς τέντας
καὶ λόγια τοῦ ἐλαλήσασιν μετὰ πολλῆς ὀδύνης.
«Κἂν ψηλαφᾶτε, οἱ ἄρχοντες, ὡς δι' ἄγαμον κοράσιον;
Νὰ εἶν' ἡ κόρη θαυμαστή, νὰ ἔνι καὶ Ρωμαίσσα; 70
Διέλθατε τὸ ἐπανώφορον, εὑρήσετε ρυάκιν:
χθὲς ἐν αὐτῷ ἐσφάξαμεν ἡδονικὰ κοράσια,
διότι οὐδὲν ἠθέλασιν ὡσὰν τὰς ἐλαλοῦμαν.»
Καὶ ὡσὰν τὸ ἐκοῦσαν οἱ ἄρχοντες, ἐθλίβησαν μεγάλως
καὶ ὥραν πολλὴν ἐποίσασιν καὶ εἰς λογισμοὺς ἐμπῆκαν
καὶ μετὰ ὥρας περισσὰς ἐφέρασιν τὸν νοῦν τους·
τὰ δάκρυα τους σφουγγίζουσιν, τὰ ρέτενα γυρίζουν,
καὶ ἦλθασιν καὶ ηὕρασιν τὸ ἑρμηνευθέντα ρυάκιν.
Ἐκεῖ ηὗραν τὰ κοράσια εἰς τὸ αἷμαν κυλισμένα:
τῶν μὲν αἱ χεῖρες ἔλειπον, ἄλλων οἱ κεφαλές των, 80
μαχαιροκοπημένες ἦν καὶ εἰς τὸ αἷμαν κυλισμένες.
Τὰς χεῖρας των ἐξήπλωσαν, τὰς κεφαλὰς κρατοῦσιν
καὶ βλέπουν καὶ τὰ πρόσωπα, νὰ εὑροῦν τὴν ἀδελφήν τους
καὶ ὅλας ἐγυρεύσασιν, στέκουν καὶ θεωροῦν τας
καὶ οὐδὲν ἐγνωρίσασι ποσῶς τὴν ἀδελφήν τους, 85
ὅτι συζουλισμένες ἦν καὶ εἰς τὸ αἷμαν κυλισμένες. 87
Καὶ ὡς εἴδασιν παράνομα, τὰ ποῖα οὐδὲν ἐλπίζαν, 88
εἰς θλίψιν ἐσεβήκασιν καὶ κάθουνται καὶ κλαίουν· 89
χοῦμαν ἐπῆραν ἐκ τῆς γῆς, τὰς κεφαλὰς τὸ βάνουν, 86
τὸν ἥλιον ἐντρυχώνοντες μετὰ πολλῶν δακρύων: 90
«Κὺρ Ἥλιε, τί νὰ ποιήσωμεν τὸ ἀδέλφιν μας νὰ εὑροῦμεν,

68: The anguish is that of the brothers, not of the heartless Saracen, whose mocking speech follows: so I read E's ἐλαλήσασιν for A's ἐλάλησε. The absence of the *verbum dicendi* is not startling in this idiom (e.g. ARM 59), even if it is not with certainty (but see EA 1190) found elsewhere in E. Furthermore, G 1.219 uses the phrase μετὰ πολλῆς ὀδύνης of the brothers (but cf. also 1.222).

69–70: I punctuate here with A note.

85–90: It is hard to be certain about the details of this passage, but this reordering

And then the five brothers looked in the tents,
looked and did not find her and then began to weep.
They met a Saracen outside a tent
and spoke to him in great anguish.
'Lords, are you searching for an unwed maid?
A wonderful maid, a Roman one?
Go up the hill, you will find a stream:
in it yesterday we slaughtered pleasant maids
because they did not do our bidding.'
And when the lords heard this they were greatly afflicted
and long fell to thinking.
And after many hours they came to their senses:
they wiped their tears, they turned the reins,
and they went and found the stream of which they had been told.
There they found maids wallowing in blood:
some had hands missing, others heads;
they were chopped about and wallowing in blood.
They stretched out their hands and they held the heads
and looked at the faces, to find their sister;
and they looked at all of them, stayed and looked at them,
but they did not recognize their sister at all,
for they were crammed together and wallowing in blood.
And when they saw lawless deeds such as they had never foreseen,
they fell into affliction and sat and wept;
they took earth from the ground and put it on their heads,
enjoining the sun with many tears:
'Lord Sun, what can we do to find our sister?

(cf. G 1.226ff) appears to make more sense, with the earth being put by the brothers on their own heads, not on the girls' heads as a form of burial (which takes place at 125). 87 looks like a scribal filler of the sort in which E abounds.

91–122: As it appears in the MS, this is an exceptionally long speech—even G (1.234–54) restricts it to only 20 lines—and some of it will have been interpolated, with results that are in every sense disproportionate. (The presence of elements that would have appealed to the redactor of G, but which are not in G,

καὶ πῶς νὰ τὴν γνωρίσωμεν, νὰ τὴν θέλωμεν θάψει;
Ποῖον μαντάτον νὰ ὑπάγωμεν τὴν ταπεινήν μας μάνα;
Κὺρ Ἥλιε, τί μᾶς ἔποικες καὶ ἐκακοδοίκησές μας;
Καὶ ἀπὲ τοῦ νῦν οὐ πρέπει μας νὰ εἴμεσθε εἰς τὸν κόσμον.
Ἐμεῖς 'ς τὸν κόσμον πολεμοῦμεν καὶ δικαιώνουν ἄλλους.
(Γῆ, . . . θρήνησον πικρῶς καὶ τὸ θέαμα κλαῦσον·
εἶδες θαυμάσματα πολλά, τὸ ἀδέλφιν μας νὰ σφάξουν.
Ἢ πάλι ὅτι αἰχμαλώτευσαν τὴν ἡλιογεννημένην;
Κοράσια ἔσφαξαν πολλὰ καὶ ἐποῖκαν τα θυσίας
. . . εἰς ναοὺς τῶν εἰδώλων,
εἰς τουρκικὰ μασγίδια καὶ εἰς ναοὺς μεγάλους.
Ἀφοῦ κατῆλθεν ὁ Χριστὸς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ εἰς τὸν κόσμον,
ἐδίωξεν τὰς παράνομας καὶ μυσαρὰς θυσίας,
ἔδειξεν καὶ τὸν θάνατον καλόν 'ς τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον.)
Καὶ μόνον δὲν τοὺς ἔσωζεν νὰ ἐβγάλουν τὴν ψυχήν σου,
ἀμὴ ἔκοψαν τὰ κάλλη σου καὶ ἀγνώριστος ὑπάρχεις·
καὶ ἰδοὺ τὸ σῶμα φαίνεται . . . ὀμπρός μας,
τὴν δὲ μορφήν σου οὐ βλέπομεν, ἔδε ἀνομία μεγάλη!
Ἀμὴ ἡ ψυχὴ ὅταν ἐβγῇ, χάνεται καὶ ἡ ὄψις.
Ὀϊμέν, ἀδέλφιν μας καλόν, οὐδὲν σὲ θεωροῦμεν·
ἐξέβηκέν σου καὶ ἡ ψυχή, ἐχάθη καὶ τὸ κάλλος·
ὁ σκύλος σὲ ἐσκότωσεν καὶ ἐχάσεν σου τὰ κάλλη.
(Ὢ πονηρίας, ὠμότητος, ὢ βία τῶν ἀλλοφύλων!
Ὢ παναθλία, τί ἔπαθες ἐκ τῆς παραδικίας!
Καὶ οὐ βλέπει ὁ Θεὸς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ χυθέντα σου τὸ αἷμα;
Καὶ ὑπέμεινες, μακρόθυμε, τούτην τὴν ἀνομίαν;)
Δέξου, καὶ λάβε, ἀδέλφι μας, θρήνους τῶν ἀδελφῶν σου·

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seems a sign of possible interpolation.) Here (as, e.g., at RDA 1729–32) I enclose in round brackets expatiations which are in some sense (rhetorically speaking, at least) detachable from the main burden of the speech: a lament or μοιρολόγι has been expanded in a militantly Christian direction—diluting the pathos and impact of the address to the Sun, which is found in ARM, and even, as Grégoire showed, in a fourth-century papyrus. In particular, the references here to sacrifices in Turkish mosques etc (including the significantly unhistorical line 101, deleted by A) are a typical feature, not of Byzantine heroic poetry, but of the Laments for

And how can we recognize her to bury her?
What news are we to take to our poor mother?
Lord Sun, what you have done to make sorry work of us!
Henceforth we should not be in this world:
for while we do battle revenge is exacted on others.
(Earth, mourn bitterly and bewail the sight:
you have seen many wonders, that they slaughter our sister.
—Or is it that they have made a prisoner of the sunborn maid?—
They have slaughtered many maids and made them sacrifices
in temples of idols,
in Turkish mosques and great temples.
When Christ came down from heaven to earth
he banished lawless and heinous sacrifices
and showed death to be good to this world.)
And it was not enough for them to drive out your soul,
but they have chopped up your beauty and you are unrecognizable;
and, lo, your body is visible before us
but we see not your form—what lawlessness!
But when the soul departs so too does the visage.
Alas, good sister, we cannot see you at all;
your soul has gone out, your beauty is effaced:
the dog has killed you and effaced your beauty.
(Oh wickedness and cruelty! Oh violence of those of alien race!
O wretched one, what you have suffered at the hands of wrong!
Does God in heaven not see your blood spilt?
And didst Thou, patient One, endure to see this lawlessness?)
Sister, deign to accept your brothers' lament;

Constantinople. This aspect goes well beyond G, and may be a sign that some corruptions in our MS (second half of the fifteenth century) are more than linguistic.

93: The word μαντάτον here, which is metrically awkward, may have intruded as a synonym for μήνυμα.

96: Like other phrases in E introduced by ὅτι (e.g. 87, 892), this comes under suspicion as a gloss: even as emended by A, its meaning is obscure and the verse unmetrical. 95 on its own just amounts to what is said in e.g. 159 or 395.

ἄσπιλε, παμμακάριστε, δέξου πηγὰς δακρύων·
μίαν καὶ μόνην σὲ εἴχαμεν, παραμυθίαν μεγάλην.
(Ὡς προσδοκοῦμεν, ἔθανες καὶ δόξα σοι, ὁ Κύριος,
. . . ὅτι ἐφύλαξες τὴν παρθενίαν σου, κόρη.)»
Τότε πολλὰ ἀναγκάσθησαν, κλαίοντες τὴν ἀδελφήν τους,
καὶ ψηλαφῶντες ἀκριβῶς οὐκ ἠμποροῦν τὴν εὕρειν.
Κοινὸν τάφον ἐποίησαν καὶ ὅλες ἀπέσω ἐθάψαν
καὶ ἐστράφησαν 'ς τὸν ἀμιρὰν μετὰ κακῆς καρδίας.
Ἔλυσαν τὰ φηκάρια τους, καὶ οἱ πέντε ἐξεσπαθῶσαν
καὶ εἰς πρόσωπον τὸν ἀμιρὰν οὕτως τὸν συντυχαίνουν:
«Ὦ ἀμιρά, πρωτοαμιρά, καὶ σκύλε τῆς Συρίας·
τὸ ἀδέλφιν μας τὸ ἔρπαξες, μηδὲν μᾶς τὸ στερέψης.
Ἢ δεῖξε μας τὸ ἀδέλφι μας ἢ κόπτομεν κ' ἐσέναν.»
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τούτους ὁ ἀμιράς, πολλὰ τοὺς ἐφοβήθην·
ἐστάθη καὶ ἀνερώταν τους: «Τίνες καὶ πόθεν εἶστε,
καὶ ποίας γενεᾶς ὑπάρχετε ἀπὸ τῆς Ρωμανίας;»
Καὶ τότε ὁ πρῶτος ἀδελφὸς οὕτως ἀπιλογᾶται:
«Ἡμεῖς γὰρ εὑρισκόμεθα ἀπὸ γενέας μεγάλης:
Πατήρ μας ἦτον ἀπὸ τῶν Δουκάδων τὴν μερέαν
καὶ γενεὰν δ' ἡ μήτηρ μας ἀπὸ τοὺς Κιρμαγάστρους.
Δώδεκα θείους εἴχαμεν καὶ ἕξι ἐξαδέλφους·
τὸν κύρην μας ἐξόρισαν διὰ μούρτη εἰς τὰ φουσάτα·
ἐκεῖνοι ἂν σε εἶχαν εὑρεῖ, Συρίαν οὐκ ἐθεώρεις.
Πέντε ἀδελφοὺς ἐγέννησεν ἡ μάνα μας, τοὺς βλέπεις,
καὶ μίαν εἴχαμε ἀδελφήν, τὴν ἡλιογεννημένην,
καὶ οὕτως τὴν ἐχαιρόμασθε μὲ τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας.»
Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς οὕτως ἀπιλογᾶται: 148
«Πατήρ μας ἦτον Ἀαρὼν καὶ θεῖος ὁ Καροήλης, 145
ὁ Μουσελὼμ ὁ ἐξάκουστος πατὴρ ἦν τοῦ πατρός μας

121–2: An addition as notable for its lack of realism as for its inhumane piety: if authentic, uncharacteristic of LE as a whole.

129: 'Dog' (insulting to a Muslim: it has been expressed by the brothers among themselves at 113) replaces the formulaic 'foremost' here (cf.59 and, for a variant of this type of address, RA 797). These words to the Emir are logically inconsistent with the brothers' apparent belief that their sisters are dead—but they have nothing to lose by threatening him.

stainless one, blessed one, receive our springs of tears;
you were our one and only sister, a great consolation.
We expect that you are dead; and glory to Thee, Lord,
that you, maid, kept your virginity!'
Then they were under great duress, bewailing their sister,
and searching closely they could not find her.
They made a mass grave and buried them all in it;
and they returned to the Emir sore at heart.
They undid their scabbards and drew their swords;
and to the Emir's face they addressed him thus:
'Emir, foremost Emir, and dog of Syria,
you carried off our sister: do not deprive us of her.
Show us our sister or we will chop you up.'
And when the Emir saw them he was sore afraid;
he stayed and asked them: 'Who are you and where from,
and of what line in the land of the Romans?'
And then the eldest brother thus replied:
'We belong to a great line.
Our father was of the Doukas family
and our mother is of the line of the Kir-Magastri.
We had twelve uncles and six cousins;
our father was exiled for a mutiny in the army;
if they had found you, you should never have seen Syria again.
Our mother bore the five brothers you see,
and we had one sister, the sun-born maid;
and we used to make her rejoice with our valiant deeds.'
148 And then the Emir thus replied:
'Our father was Aaron and our uncle Karoeles;
the famous Mouselom was our father's father;

133–4: It is interesting that this material comes here only: it sets the two family trees side by side at the point at which the families are to be set against each other.

140: Mutiny suggests intransigent toughness; what we do not know is whether the exile was imposed long ago or recently, and whether, like Aaron (145), the brothers' father was dead.

143: The epithet makes 90ff particularly appropriate.

καὶ ἐκεῖ τοὺς ἐνταφίασαν 'ς τὸν τάφον τοῦ προφήτου.
Ἐμὲν ποτὲ οὐκ ἐπήντησεν στρατηγὸς ἢ τοπάρχης· 149
φουσάτα πάλιν ἔντρεψα πέρσικα καὶ ρωμαίκα 150
καὶ κάστρα ἐπαράλαβα μετὰ τοὺς ἡγεμόνας.
Τὸ θέαμα τὸ ἔπαθα εἰς ἐσᾶς ποτὲ οὐκ ἐλησμονῶ το: 153
ἀφῶν ἠρξάμην πολεμεῖν ἀνδραγαθίας μεγάλας,
οὐδὲν ηὑρέθηκεν κανεὶς, ἵνα μὲ καταφθάσῃ,
καὶ πολεμήσῃ, νεώτερε, καὶ ἐπάρῃ μου τὸ κοῦρσος.
Καὶ ἐδάρτε τὸ ἔπαθα εἰς ἐσᾶς ποτὲ οὐκ ἐλησμονῶ το·
τὰ φουσάτα ἐντροπίασα καὶ ὅλην μου τὴν γενέαν·
σήμερον νὰ ἀπόθανα καὶ οὐ θέλω τὴν ζωήν μου.
Ἀμὴ ἂς ἀφήσω τὰ πολλὰ καὶ τὸ φλυαροστομίζειν 160
καὶ ἐδὰ σᾶς λέγω φανερὰ ἅπασαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν,
ἂν ἔν' καὶ καταδέχεσθε νὰ μ' ἔχετε γαμπρό σας:
ἐγὼ ἔχω καὶ τὸ ἀδέλφι σας καὶ ὡς δι' αὕτην μὴ λυπᾶσθε.
Καὶ τοῦτο ὀμνύω καὶ λέγω σας μά τὸν ‹καλὸν› προφήτην,
. . . τὸν μέγαν Μαχουμέτην: 165
οὔτε φίλημαν μ' ἔδωκεν, οὔτε μιλίαν τῆς εἶπα.
Καὶ ἄλλας πολλὰς ἐπιάσασιν οἱ ἄνομοι Ἀραβῖται, 170
καὶ ἐπούλησαν καὶ ἐσφάξαν τας ἀνόμως καὶ ἀδίκως·
καὶ ἡ ἀδελφή σας ἔτυχεν ἐμέναν εἰς τὸ κοῦρσος,
καὶ αὐτὴν ἐπαραφύλαγα ὡς διὰ τὰ ὡραῖα της κάλλη·
καὶ ἐγὼ ὡς δι' αὐτὸ τὴν ἤκρυβα καὶ ἀναγύριζά σας. 168
Ὑπᾶτε εἰς τὴν τέντα μου τὸ ἀδέλφιν σας νὰ εὑρῆτε: 169
ἐσᾶς τοὺς πέντε ἐπάντεχεν ἡμέρας τε καὶ νύκτας. 167
Καὶ ὑπᾶτε, παραλάβετε ἀμόλυντον κοράσιον.

145: The Emir's mother is not mentioned, by contrast with 138; in addition to reflecting cultural difference this may be a pointer to her succumbing in the end.

151–2: A reads: καὶ κάστρα ἐπαράλαβα ἀμύθητα, ἡγεμόνας
‹αἰχμαλώτους› ἐπίασα Πέρσας καὶ στρατιώτας.
The syntax is awkward; the noun and epithet across the caesura unusual;the type of enjambement unique in E; the supplement conjectural and elevating a probable prose gloss into a verse in its own right.

154: Echoes 144: their deeds for the girl override his before the girl.

and they buried them there at the Prophet's Tomb.
149 Never have I been resisted by general or governor;
150 and I have turned to flight Persian and Roman armies
and captured castles with their commanders.
153 But the spectacle I have been made at your hands, I shall never forget it.
Since the time I started to do battle with valiant deeds
155 no one has never been found to chase me down
and fight with me, young man, and take my plunder from me.
And what I have suffered at your hands, I shall never forget it:
I have brought shame on my army and my whole line;
today I would die and want my life no longer.
160 But let me leave these many words and this prattle,
and let me tell you openly the whole truth,
if you agree to have me as your brother-in-law:
I am in possession of your sister: do not grieve for her.
And this I swear and say to you by the good Prophet,
165 great Muhammad:
she never gave me a kiss, nor did I say a thing to her.
170 Many other girls were seized by the lawless Arabians,
and they sold them or slaughtered them without law or justice;
but your sister was my part of the plunder,
and I was keeping her safe for her handsome beauty;
168 and that is why I tried to hide her and deceive you.
169 Come to my tent to find your sister:
167 she has been waiting for you five by day and by night.
Come and take an unsullied maid.

159: Compare *Cid* 1022: 'I would rather die and give up my soul.'

163–73: It is evident that (like Trapp) I have reordered wholesale here in order to make better sense of the passage, and especially of 168. 165 could be deleted if we read with G 1.307 and Trapp μά τὸν μέγαν προφήτην.

170–1: The Emir is expressing, either a Wellingtonian attitude, to the effect that his troops are the scum of the earth, or his own adherence to νόμος and δίκη in order to prepare the way to his offer—or both.

Ἐγὼ δὲ διὰ τὰ κάλλη της καὶ τὴν πολλὴν εὐγένειαν
ἀρνοῦμαι καὶ τὴν πίστι μου καὶ τὴν πολλήν μου δόξαν
καὶ γίνομαι καὶ Χριστιανὸς καὶ μετὰ σᾶς νὰ ἔλθω.»
Καὶ τότε οἱ πέντε ἀδελφοὶ εἰς τὴν τένταν ὑπαγαίνουν
καὶ ηὗραν κλινάριν ἔμορφον, ξυλαλόην ἐφειασμένον,
καὶ ἀπάνω πάπλωμα χρυσὸν καὶ ἀπάνω κεῖται κόρη 180
καὶ ἐκάθετον ἡ λυγερὴ ὡς μῆλον μαραμένον
καὶ ἔκλαιεν καὶ ὀδύρετον, τὰ ἀδέλφια της ἐζήταν.
Αὐτὴ καὶ ἂν ἐμαραίνετον, ἔλαμπεν ὡς ὁ ἥλιος
καὶ ὁμοίαζεν ἡ πανέμορφος ἀκτίναν τοῦ ἡλίου.
(Τὸ κάλλος ἐμαραίνετον τῆς θαυμαστῆς τῆς κόρης·
ὢ συμφορὰ καὶ θέαμα καὶ ἀσωτίας ἔργον!)
Καὶ ὡς εἴδασιν τὰ ἀδέλφια της τὴν κόρην μαραμένην,
ἀντάμα οἱ πέντε ἐστέναξαν, τοιοῦτον λόγον εἶπαν:
«Ἐγείρου, ἡ βεργόλικος, γλυκύν μας τὸ ἀδέλφιν·
τὸ ἄνθος τοῦ προσώπου σου ἐμάρανεν ἡ θλίψις. 192
Ἡμεῖς θανοῦσαν σὲ εἴχομεν καὶ σπαθοκοπημένην 190
καὶ ἐσὲν ὁ Θεὸς ἐφύλαξεν διὰ τὰ ὡραῖα σου κάλλη.
Πολέμους οὐ φοβούμεθα διὰ τὴν σὴν ἀγάπην.» 193
Οἱ πέντε τὴν καταφιλοῦν καὶ ἐλιγοθυμῆσαν·
οἱ μὲν φιλοῦν τὰ χείλη της, οἱ ἄλλοι τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς της. 195
Κάθουνται οἱ πέντε ἀδελφοὶ καὶ ὁ ἀμιρὰς ἐκεῖνος:
κοινὴν βουλὴν ἐδώκασιν νὰ πάρουν τον γαμπρόν τους.
Καὶ εἰς μίαν ὁρίζει ὁ ἀμιρὰς κ' ἐκράτησε μετ' αὗτον 199
τοὺς θαυμαστοὺς ἀγούρους του, τοὺς εἶχε εἰς τὴν βουλήν του· 200
τοὺς ἄλλους ἐπιλόγιασε καὶ ὑπᾶν εἰς τὴν Συρίαν.
Καὶ ὁ ἀμιρὰς ἐδιάγειρεν ἀντάμα μὲ τὴν κόρην εἰς Ρωμανίαν νὰ ἔβγουν.

178–80: There is a sort of suspense in the gradual introduction of the girl herself.

181–4: Three short similes in succession: the apple appears to be withered, with the popular association of infertility; but the girl's sun-born nature shines through. Compare the name of the Cid's daughter Sol, who with her sister is 'as white as the sun' (*Cid* 2333).

185–6: If this is not a scribal exclamation, it should perhaps be placed after 182.

175 And I for her beauty and high rank
renounce both my faith and my great glory
and I shall turn Christian and come with you.'
And then the five brothers went into the tent
and found a beautiful bed made of aloe wood,
180 and on it a golden quilt, and on it lay the maid;
and there was the lissom maid like a withered apple,
and she was weeping and lamenting, asking for her brothers.
But though she was withering, yet she shone like the sun
and the beautiful maid was like a ray of the sun.
185 (The beauty of the wonderful maid was withering—
oh misfortune and spectacle and deed of debauchery!)
And when the brothers saw the maid withered
the five groaned as one and spoke thus:
'Arise maid of lissom figure, sweet sister:
192 the flower of your face has been withered by grief!
190 We had you for dead and chopped up by the sword,
but God saved you for your handsome beauty.
193 In our love for you we fear no battles!'
The five kissed her fervently and swooned;
195 some kissed her lips, others her eyes.
The five brothers and that Emir sat:
they reached a joint decision to take him as brother-in-law.
199 And the Emir at once decreed to keep with him
200 the wonderful lads that he had at his command;
the others he picked off, and they went to Syria.
And the Emir returned with the maid

198 to go to the land of the Romans

190: A's supplement from G 1.324 for a line that has dropped out.

191: The echo of 173 is significant: the brothers thank God, not the Emir, for her safety.

192: I have placed this line in a more natural place.

197: Reading τον for A's τὸν, and omitting the next half-line as a gloss.

200: A small private guard, probably of a hundred men (606).

καὶ μὲ τοὺς γυναικαδελφούς, 's τὴν Ρωμανίαν ὑπᾶσιν. 203/4
Ὀμπρὸς ὑπᾶν οἱ ἀγοῦροι του καὶ ὁ ἀμιρὰς ὀπίσω
καὶ τὸ κοράσιον εἰς κλουβίν, βαστοῦν την πέντε μοῦλες·
τριγύρου τὴν παρακρατοῦν τὰ πέντε της ἀδέλφια.
Καὶ βλέπει ὅλος ὁ λαὸς τὴν χαρὰν τούτην ὅλην·
ὀπίσω τὴν ἀκολουθοῦν θαυμάζοντες τὴν κόρην·
ἔβλεπαν τὴν αἰχμαλωσίαν ‹καὶ ὅλον του τὸ κοῦρσος›
τὸ πῶς τὴν ἐλευθέρωσεν δι' ἀγάπην κορασίου.
Τὸ «Κύριε ἐλέησον» ἔκραξαν ὁποὺ τὴν ἐγλυτῶσαν
καὶ ἐδάρτε ἦν ἐξακουστὸν εἰς ἅπασαν τὸν κόσμον
ὅτι κοράσιον πάντερπνον ἐνίκησεν φουσάτον
κἂν χιλιάδες ἑκατὸν ὡς γιὰ τὰ ὡραῖα της κάλλη
καὶ ἐδιάγειρεν τὸν ἀμιρὰν τὸν πρῶτον τῆς Συρίας.
(Καὶ ἀφότις εὐλογήθησαν, ἐχαίρετον μετ' αὔτην.
Καὶ ἀφότις ἐκοιμήθηκεν τὴν ἡλιογεννημένην,
ἔτεκαν παῖδα θαυμαστόν, τὸν Διγενὴν Ἀκρίτην,
φωστῆραν τὸν αὐγερινόν, ἥλιον τὸν φωσφόρον
καὶ περιέλαμπρον τὸ φῶς εἰς ἅπασαν τὴν κτίσιν,
καὶ εἰς ἀπελάτας δυνατὸς καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἀνδρειωμένους.
Ἐγεννήθη, ἐμεγάλωσε καὶ ἐγίνην τετραέτης,
ἐχέρισε καὶ ἐμάνθανε τὰς γονικάς του ἀνδρείας.)
Καὶ μετὰ χρόνον οὐ πολὺν . . .
ἔπεψε ἡ μάνα του χαρτὶν ἀπέσω ἀπὸ Συρίας,

207: To guard against raiders: cf. AR 665ff.

208: They must have travelled some distance, but the arrival is immediate: no interest attaches to details of the journey; it is the Emir's later trip that is dwelt on, with its length specified (380–1). MG χαρά is both 'joy' and 'wedding'.

210: My supplement from 26 (cf. also 172).

211: A reads with E: διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην κόρης. My reading assumes that an unthinking assimilation to 202 and 209 has replaced the catch-phrase of RA 709.

213–16: This conclusion with a proverbial statement constitutes the conclusion of an archetypal lay (and, as it happens, of G's Book 1): *amor vincit omnia.* In its present, more sophisticated form, the story will continue with the endangering of this happy state of affairs by the Emir's loyalty to his mother, and the overcoming of that danger.

217–24: In the original Lay of the Emir this passage introducing Akrites will not have appeared; it is of early date, before G, and it may even have been the first

and his wife's brothers, and they went to the land of the Romans
In front went his lads, and the Emir behind,
with the maid in a cab drawn by five mules;
and her five brothers took up position around her.
And the whole populace saw all this celebration:
they followed behind, marvelling at the maid:
they saw how what he had captured, and all his plunder,
had been freed by the Emir for the love of a maid.
They cried the 'Kyrie Eleison' for her saving;
and now it was famed through all the world
that a lovely maid had vanquished an army
even a hundred thousand strong, with her handsome beauty,
and had turned around the Emir, the foremost of Syria.
(And when they had been blessed in marriage he enjoyed her;
and when he had slept with the sun-born maid
they bore a wonderful child, Digenes Akrites,
a bright morning-star, a light-bearing sun,
and a light shining over all creation,
and strong among the raiders and the valiant.
He was born, grew, and reached the age of four;
and he started to learn his parental valour.)
But after no long time
his mother sent him a letter from Syria,

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compiler who felt it incumbent on him to give a greater prominence to the hero of the collection as a whole, Digenes Akrites. But the passage spoils the proportions of the story, disrupts the movement to 225 (what we have, *pace* Alexiou, is not a lacuna but an interruption, with the Emir the subject throughout) and detracts from the impact of 244–5. Once again, I employ round brackets to show the scissors-and-paste nature of the composition.

222–4: These lines in particular attempt to give some role in the story to the Emir's son beyond his constituting a bone of contention between the Emir and his mother and part of the conflict of allegiances involved. The raiders figure nowhere else in the Lay, which appears to ignore the great bulk of the traditional material.

225: A reads with E καὶ μὲ τοὺς χρόνους τοὺς πολλούς ('and after many years') but brackets; I adopt the reading proposed in his note: the mother would hardly have allowed several years to elapse. Stretching from 228–91, the letter is

<χαρτὶν τοὺς> θρήνους γέμοντα, ὀνειδισμοὺς καὶ θλίψεις·
«Τέκνον μου ποθεινότατον, ψυχή μου, ἀναπνοή μου,
τί ἐσκότασες τὰ ὀμμάτια μου, τί ἐχάσες τὸν ἑαυτόν σου;
Τὸ γένος σου ἐντροπίασες εἰς τὴν Συρίαν ὅλην· 230
χωριάτες ὀνειδίζουν μας τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς μας.
Δὲν εἶν' κοράσια εἰς τὸν Παδά, εἰς τοῦ Παστρᾶ τὸ
κάστρον; 232/3
Καὶ οὐδὲν εἶναι κοράσια κάτω εἰς τὴν Βαβυλῶνα;
Τὰ εὐγενικὰ τοῦ Χάλεπε κοράσια οὐκ ἐνθυμᾶσαι, 236
τὰ λάμπουν ὡς ὁ ἥλιος, μυρίζουν ὡς ὁ μόσχος;
Καὶ δὲν θυμᾶσαι, τέκνον μου, κοράσια ὁποὺ ἀγάπας
καὶ δέρνουσιν τὰ στήθη των, παρηγορίαν οὐκ ἔχουν;
Οὐκ ἐνθυμᾶσαι, τέκνον μου, τοὺς θαυμαστούς σου παῖδας; 240
Ἐμὲν τὰ παραρίκτουσιν καὶ ὀνειδίζουσίν με,
καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς οἱ πρόλοιποι καὶ ὅλον τὸ φουσάτον·
ἐμὲν κατονειδίζουσιν ὡς διὰ σένα, τέκνον.
Ἤκουσα ἐγέννησας παιδίν, δράκοντα τῆς Συρίας,
καὶ ἀλὶ ἐμέν, ἀλὶ ἐμέν, ἂν μάθουν οἱ Κασίσοι,
ἀλὶ ἂν τὸ μάθουν ἀπὸ Ἐμὲκ καὶ τὸ Ὀραζαβοῦρον·
μὴ ἀνοίξουν τὸ μασγίδιν των τοῦ μέγα Μαχουμέτη,
νὰ κλάψουν εἰς τὸ μνῆμαν του καὶ νὰ σοῦ καταρῶνται.
Καὶ οὐδὲν θυμᾶσαι, τέκνον μου, τί ἐποίκαμεν οἱ δύο μας;

. . .

Καὶ ἀπέκει ἐκατέβημαν 'ς τὸ μνῆμαν τοῦ προφήτου, 250
καὶ ὑπέκλινες τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ εὐχίσθηκά σου, τέκνον.
Καὶ ὅταν ἠθέλες δοξασθῆν καὶ ἐπαινεθῆν μεγάλως,
ἐρνήθης καὶ τὸ γένος σου καὶ ὅλην σου τὴν Συρίαν.

τὸν ἥλιον ἀντιτάσσουν

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a very long one; we may hazard, on the basis of G, that the poet wished to bring in most of the relevant information in this way, having plunged the audience *in medias res*.

235: I omit this verse as a filler breaking the tricolon crescendo on κοράσια (232/33, 234, 236–7).

a letter full of lamentation, reproach and affliction:
'My dearest child, my soul, my breath,
why have you cast darkness over my eyes? Why have you lost yourself?
230 Your line you have disgraced in all Syria:
villagers reproach us all the days of our lives.
232/3 Are there not maids in Baghdad, in the castle of Basra?
And are there not maids down in Babylon?
236 Do you not recall the noble maids of Halab
that shine like the sun and have the scent of musk?
My child, do you not remember the maids you loved,
who beat their breasts and will not be consoled?
240 My child, do you not remember your wonderful sons?
They cast it in my teeth and reproach me,
our other kin and all the army,
they reproach me on your account, child.
I hear that you have sired a child, a dragon for Syria;
245 and woe is me, woe is me, if the Assassins learn of it;
woe if they learn of it in Himş and Orazavouron;
lest they open the mosque of great Muhammad,
weep at his tomb and lay a curse upon you.
And do you not remember, my child, what the two of us did?
We visited the Temple at Mecca
250 and then went to the the Tomb of the Prophet,
and you bowed your head and I prayed for you, child.
But when you would have had great glory and praise
you renounced your line and all your land of Syria.

235 to rival the sun

238–40: Young women and sons, but no single wife in the Muslim part of his life: monogamy will triumph in the story.

244: Either an ogre (MG δράκος, envisaging his future deeds of might; cf. the use at *Erotokritos* 5.15) or, perhaps, a snake in the grass

After 249: a line or two of the MS are missing.

Οὐδὲν θυμᾶσαι, τέκνον μου, τί ἐποῖκεν ὁ παπούς σου,
πόσους Ρωμαίους ἔσφαξεν, πόσους δούλους ἐπῆρεν;
Τὰς φυλακὰς ἐγέμισεν ἄρχοντας τῶν Ρωμαίων.
Καὶ οὐδὲν θυμᾶσαι, τέκνον μου, τί ἐποῖκεν ὁ πατήρ σου;
Τὸ Κόνιον ἐκούρσευσεν μέχρι καὶ εἰς τὸ Ἀμόρι,
εἰς Νικομήδειαν ἔφθασεν καὶ εἰς Πραίνετον ἐπέβην
καὶ ἂν οὔκ ἦτον ἡ θάλασσα, ἀκόμη εἶχε ὑπαγαίνειν. 260
Καὶ ὁ ἀδελφός μου, ὁ θεῖος σου, ὁ Μουρστασίτ, ἐπῆγεν,
τὸν Ἕρμοναν ἀνέδραμεν καὶ τὸν Ζυγὸν ἐπίασεν,
τὴν δὲ Ἀρμενίαν ἐξήλειψεν, πολὺν κακὸν ἐποίησεν.
Καὶ οὐδὲν θυμᾶσαι, τέκνον μου, τί ἐποίησεν ὁ πατήρ σου;
Πόσα κοράσια ἤφερεν εἰς τῆς Συρίας τὰ κάστρα; 265
Καὶ ἐσὺ ἐπαραξέβηκες ἀπὸ τοὺς συγγενούς σου, 267
τοὺς φίλους σου τοὺς εὐγενεῖς, ὡς διὰ Ρωμαίας ἀγάπην.
Καὶ πῶς σὲ παρεξέβαλεν ἡ χατζιροφαγούσα
καὶ ἀρνήθης καὶ τὴν πίστιν σου καὶ ὅλην σου τὴν
Συρίαν; 270
Τὴν εἶχες εἰς τοὺς σκλάβους σου ἐποῖκες την κυράν
σου 271/2
καὶ γδύνεται καὶ θέτεις την σιμά σου εἰς τὴν ἀγκάλην.
Ὅμως ἂν θέλης, τέκνον μου, νὰ ἔχης τὴν εὐχήν μου,
αὔτου φαρία σὲ ἔστειλα ἐπιλεκτά, δρομαῖα
καὶ ἀγένεια παλληκάρια, εὐγενεῖς Ἀραβίτας,
πεντακοσίους ἄρχοντας χρυσοκλιβανιασμένους
καὶ τὸ λουρίκιν τὸ χρυσὸν τὸ ἐφόρει ὁ πατήρ σου.
Τὸν βάδεον καβαλίκευσε καὶ βάλε τὸ λουρίκιν 279/80
καὶ οἱ φάρες ἂν σὲ ἀκολουθοῦν, ἐσὲν κανεὶς οὐ φθάνει.
Εἰ δὲ ἀγαπᾶς την περισσά, τέκνον, ὡσὰν μοῦ λέγουν,
ἔπαρε καὶ αὔτην μετὰ σέ· εἰ δὲ γοργὸν οὐκ ἔλθης, 283/4
μά τὸν προφήτην τὸν καλόν, τὸν μέγαν Μαχουμέτην,
τὰ τέκνα σου νὰ σφάξουσιν καὶ ἐμέναν θέλουν πνίξει·

264–73: Now the mother brings family history specifically to bear on the central grievance, the girl. 270 moves beyond mere γένος to πίστις.

My child, do you not remember what your grandfather did?
255 How many Romans he slaughtered, how many slaves he took?
He filled the prisons with Roman lords.
And my child, do you not remember what your father did?
He sacked as far as Ikonion and Amorion;
he reached Nikomedeia and sacked Prainetos;
260 and if it had not been for the sea he would have kept on going.
And my brother, your uncle Mourstasit, went
and crossed the Hermon and captured the Zygos range,
and obliterated Armenia and laid it waste.
And my child, do you not remember what your father did?
265 How many maids he brought to the castles of Syria?
267 But you have fallen away from your kin
and your noble friends for the love of a Roman woman.
And how did she lead you astray, the swine-eater,
270 that you renounced both your faith and all your land of Syria?
271/2 The one you had among your slaves—you made her your lady wife,
and she undresses and you put her by you in your embrace.
But, my child, if you wish to have my blessing,
I have sent you picked speedy horses
275 and beardless braves, noble Arabians,
five hundred lords with gilded armour
and the golden breastplate which your father wore.
279/80 Mount the chestnut horse and put on the breastplate,
and even if good mares are following you, none will catch you up.
But if you love her dearly, child, as they tell me,
283/4 bring her with you; but if you do not come at once,
285 by the good Prophet, great Muhammad,
may they slaughter your children and strangle me—

283–4: My reading for A's two incomplete verses: ἔπαρε καὶ αὔτην μετὰ σέναν / εἰ δὲ καὶ οὐκ ἔλθης τὸ γοργόν.

κοράσιά σου τὰ καλά, ἄλλους νὰ περιλάβουν.
Καὶ ἂν οὐδὲν ἔλθης τὸ γοργόν, κατέβην ἔχω εἰς Μάγγε,
. . .'ς τὸ μνῆμαν τοῦ προφήτου,
καὶ κλίνειν ἔχω κεφαλὴν ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς μου πρώτης,
καὶ νὰ ἔχης τὴν κατάραν μου ὑπὲρ εὐχῆς γονέων.»
Κ' ἐδῶκεν τους τὰ γράμματα καὶ εἰς Ρωμανίαν ἐβγῆκαν
κ' ἤλθασιν καὶ ἀπλικεύσασιν ἐκεῖ εἰς τὸ Χαλκοπέτριν.
Τὰ γράμματα ἔστειλαν κρυφὰ 'ς τὸν ἀμιρὰν ἐκεῖνον
καὶ οὕτως αὐτὸν ἐδήλωσαν διὰ τοῦ πιτακοφόρου:
«Ὁ ἀμιράς, ἀφέντης μας, . . .
νύκτα ἂν περιπατήσωμεν, τὸ φέγγος φέγγει ὅλον.»
Ἀνέγνωσαν τὰ γράμματα καὶ οὕτως ἐδηλῶναν.
Καὶ ὡς ἤκουσεν τὰ γράμματα, ἐθλίβην ἡ ψυχή του,
ἐκαύσθηκαν τὰ σπλάχνα του, ἐχάθην ἡ καρδία του·
ἤκουσεν διὰ τὴν μάναν του, τὰ τέκνα του ἐνθυμήθη
καὶ τὰ κοράσια τὰ καλὰ τὰ πολυπόθητά του·
καὶ ἐνέγνωθεν τὰ γράμματα καὶ ἀπέκει ἐφίλησέν τα.
Ὡς λέων ἐβρυχίσθηκεν, σεβαίνει εἰς τὸ κουβούκλιν
καὶ τὴν καλήν του τὰ λαλεῖ καὶ τὴν βουλήν του λέγει
καὶ τέτοια συμβουλεύεται καὶ οὕτως τὴν συντυχαίνει:
«Ἡ μήτηρ μου μὲ ἀπέστειλεν γράμματα ἀπὸ Συρίας
καὶ ἀγούρους μοῦ ἀπέστειλεν ἐνταῦθα νὰ μὲ πάρουν
καὶ νὰ μὲ πάρουσιν γοργόν, νὰ ὑπάγω μετ' ἐκείνους,
νὰ ἰδῶ καὶ τὴν μητέραν μου καὶ πάλιν νὰ διαγείρω.»
Καὶ ταῦτα ἡ κόρη ὡς ἤκουσεν, βαρέα ἀναστενάζει
καὶ ἐπήδησαν τὰ δάκρυα της καὶ ἐχάθηκεν ὁ νοῦς της·
καὶ ὁ νοῦς της συλλογίζεται ἵνα τὰ μαντατεύση
τ' ἀδέλφιά της τὰ γλυκιὰ . . .
Καὶ πάλιν περικόπτεται διὰ ταραχὰς καὶ μάχας·

290–1: Cf. 250–1 and of course 2: a conflict between two mothers.

293: A real but non-specific name. G *init.* is vague as to exactly from what city the girl was captured by the Emir; we might conceivably infer Amorion from RA 732; but there is a (deliberate) lack of clarity here.

may your fine maids embrace other men.
And if you do not come at once I shall go to Mecca,
to the Tomb of the Prophet,
and I shall bow my head in shame for the blessing I once gave you;
and you shall have my curse instead of a parent's blessing.'
And she gave them the letter and they went to the land of the Romans
and came and camped at Chalkopetrin.
They sent the letter secretly to that Emir,
and made this statement through the message-bearer:
'Emir, master,
if we go tonight, the moon is shining full.'
They read the letter and made this statement.
And when he heard the letter his spirit was grieved;
his vitals were inflamed and his heart was lost:
he heard of his mother, he remembered his children
and his fine, desirable maids.
And he read the letter and then kissed it.
Like a lion he roared and went into the chamber,
and spoke to his loved one and told her his will,
and confided in her thus, and thus conversed:
'My mother has sent me a letter from Syria
and sent me lads here to take me,
to take me at once, to go with them,
to see my mother and then return.'
And when the maid heard this she made a deep groan,
and her tears leapt up and her mind was lost;
and she was minded to tell the news
to her sweet brothers.
But she was anxious at the thought of disturbance and fighting,

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295: The verse is supplied by Alexiou from the Trebizond version (17th century, whose ancestor, Z, probably used the MS of E itself: see Jeffreys 1983: V).

302: With some realism, a twinge of regret for the polygamous life.

καὶ πείθει την ὁ λογισμὸς νὰ μὴ τὸ ὁμολογήση,
μὴ ἐκφανερώση τὰ κρυπτὰ μυστήρια τοῦ καλοῦ της.
Καὶ ὁ ὕστερός της ἀδελφὸς 'ς τὸν ὕπνον του τὸ εἶδεν·
καὶ σκοτεινὰ σηκώνεται, λέγει τῶν ἀδελφῶν του:
«Εἶδα, ἀδέλφια μου, ὄνειρον καὶ οὕτως γὰρ δηλώνει·
εἶδα εἰς τὸ Χαλκόπετρον γέρακας πετομένους
καὶ ἀετὸς χρυσόπτερος ἐσέβη εἰς τὸ κουβούκλιν·
περιστερὰν ἐδίωκεν ἄσπρην ὡς εἶν' τὸ χιόνιν
καὶ ἤπλωσα τὰ χέρια μου κ' ἐπίασα καὶ τὰ δύο
καὶ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐπόνεσεν, δι' αὗτον ταχιὰ ἐσηκώθην.»
Καὶ τότε ὁ πρῶτος ἀδελφὸς οὕτως ἀπιλογᾶται:
«Φαίνεται, ἀδέλφια, οἱ γέρακες ἄνδρες ἁρπάκτες ἔνι
καὶ ὁ χρυσόπτερος ἀετός, φαίνεται, ἔνι ὁ γαμπρός μας,
περιστερὰ τὸ ἀδέλφι μας· μὴ τὸ κακοδοικήση.
'Αλλ' ἂς καβαλικεύσωμεν καὶ ἂς περιγυριστοῦμεν,
ὅπου εἴδαμεν τὸ ὄνειρον, ὅπου εἴδαμεν γεράκια.»
Οἱ πέντε ἐκαβαλίκευσαν καὶ ὑπᾶν 's τὸ Χαλκοπέτριν.
'Εκεῖ ηὗραν τοὺς Σαρακηνούς, εὐγενεῖς 'Αραβίτας·
γελώντας τοὺς ἐλάλησαν, νὰ μὴ τοὺς ἐγνωρίσουν:
«Καλῶς τὰ παλληκάρια μας, γεράκια τοῦ γαμπροῦ μας·
τί ὧδε ἐπεζεύσατε καὶ οὐκ ἤλθετε εἰς τὸν οἶκον;»
Σαρακηνὸς ἐλάλησεν, τὸν λέγασιν Μουσούφρην:
«Χθὲς ἐπαραβραδιάστημαν καὶ ἐμείναμεν ἀπῶδε.»
Καὶ τότε οἱ πέντε ἀδελφοὶ εἰς τὸν οἶκον ὑπαγαίνουν·
μὲ ταραχὰς ὑπήντησαν, τὸν ἀμιρὰν λαλοῦσιν:
«Αὐτοῦ φαρία σὲ ἀπέστειλαν, ἐπίλεκτα, δρομαῖα
καὶ ἀγένεια παλληκάρια ἀπὸ τοὺς 'Αραβίτας
καὶ τὸ λουρίκιν τὸ χρυσόν, τὸ ἐφόρει ὁ πατήρ σου·
καὶ ἂν μισεύσειν βούλεσαι ἀπὸ τὴν Ρωμανίαν,

318: Constantine is again at the centre of the action.

335: A colloquial phrase: the Emperor Alexios Komnenos, in a popular song of 1081, is referred to as γεράκιν μου. Here, of course, the phrase conceals the brothers' knowledge, through the dream, of what's up.

337: A particular Saracen is named for the impression of authenticity;

and reason convinced her not to reveal it,
not to reveal her loved one's confidences.
But the youngest brother saw it in his sleep,
and he rose while it was still dark and told his brothers:
'Brothers, I have seen a dream, and this is how it goes:
I saw hawks flying at Chalkopetrin;
and an eagle with golden wings entered the chamber,
and it was chasing a dove white as snow—
and I put out my hands and caught both.
And I was pained at heart, and this is why I rose early.'
And the eldest brother thus replied:
'It appears, brothers, that the hawks are abductors;
and the eagle with golden wings is, it appears, our brother-in-law,
and the dove our sister—let him not mistreat her!
But let us ride and search about,
since we have seen the dream, since we have seen hawks.'
The five rode and went to Chalkopetrin:
there they found the Saracens, noble Arabians.
Laughing they spoke to them, lest they know their purpose:
'Welcome to our braves, our brother-in-law's hawks!
Why have you dismounted here and not come to the house?'
A Saracen spoke; he was called Mousouphres:
'Yesterday we were benighted and stayed here.'
And then the five brothers went home;
they came to the Emir in tumult and spoke to him:
'Picked speedy steeds have been sent to you here,
and beardless braves from among the Arabians,
and the gold breastplate which your father wore—
and if you wish to leave the land of the Romans

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cf. RA 928.

341–4: A sign of a narrative economy unlike that of lays closer to the oral tradition (ARM), which repeat especially speeches more or less *verbatim*. Here the passage almost repeats 274–8, but 277 is omitted here so as to reduce the seeming likelihood that the Emir may make a fight of it.

σήμερον. ἔπαρε τὰ σὰ καὶ τὰ ἤφερες μὴ ἀφήσης.
Τὴν ἀδελφήν μας ἄφις την, τὸν παῖδα σου ἀπαρνήσου
καὶ ἡμεῖς νὰ τὸν ἐκθρέψωμεν καὶ ὁ Θεὸς νὰ τὸν δικαιώση.
Μὴ βουληθῇς, ὦ ἀμιρά, νὰ ἔβγης κρυφῶς ἀπ' ὧδε
καὶ ὅπου σὲ καταφθάσωμεν ἄλλον Συρίαν οὐ βλέπεις.»
Καὶ ὡς τὸ ἤκουσεν ὁ ἀμιράς, πολλὰ τοὺς ἐφοβήθη
ὁ νοῦς του ἐσυνετρόμαξεν καὶ οὐδὲν τοὺς ἀπεκρίθην.
Ὡς λέων ὠρυόμενος ἐσέβη εἰς τὸ κουβούκλιν·
τὴν κόρην ὀνειδίζοντα οὕτως τὴν συντυχαίνει:
«Οὕτως εἰσὶν οἱ Χριστιανοὶ καὶ οὕτως φυλάσσουν ὅρκους;
Καὶ οὐδὲν θυμᾶσαι ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς τὸ τί ἔπαθα δι' ἐσέναν;
Δούλην σὲ ἐπῆρα ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς ἀπὸ τὰ γονικά σου· 359
σκλάβαν σέ ἐπῆρα ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς καὶ εἶχα σε ὡς κυράν μου· 356
καὶ τὰ ὅριζες ἐγίνουντα, τὰ ἤθελες ἐποίουν. 358
Ἐμὲν ποτὲ οὐκ ἐπήντησεν στρατηγὸς ἢ τοπάρχης·
στανεό μου οὐδὲν μοῦ ἐμίλησαν, τινὰς μὴ τὸ καυχᾶται·
καὶ ὁ πόθος σου μὲ ἠνέγκασεν καὶ εἰς Ῥωμανίαν ἐξέβην·
τὴν πίστιν μου ἀρνήθηκα, κυρά μου, ὡς διὰ ἐσέναν,
τοὺς θαυμαστοὺς τοὺς παῖδας μου, καὶ μετὰ ἐσέναν ἦρθα,
καὶ ἐδάρε μὲ κακοδοικεῖς καὶ ἐπιβουλεύεσαί με:
νὰ μὲ σκοτώσουν θέλουσιν οἱ πέντε ἀδελφοί σου.

καὶ ἐσύ ἔχεις ἐμέναν τώρα δοῦλον

348: Not γαμπρέ any more, as he is understood to be at 328; with the provisional reconciliation of 439 this mode of address will be readopted.

349: Compare the phrase of *Cid* e.g. 1027: 'non veredes christianismo'—'you will never again see Christian lands'. The brothers are as confident that they will catch him as his mother was sure that they couldn't (281); the threat echoing 141 confirms the fear that we are back to square one.

354–59: Here I have reordered, and deleted the part-verse (probably a prose filler) 357. The Emir is back to atavistic loyalties and suspicions; his echo of 157

take your things today, and do not leave what you brought.
As for our sister, leave her, and renounce your child;
and we shall raise him, and may God avenge him.
But Emir, have no intention of leaving here in secret:
wherever we catch up with you, you will not see Syria again.'
And when the Emir heard this he was sore afraid;
his mind was a-tremble and he made no reply.
Roaring like a lion he went into the chamber;
reproaching the girl he thus conversed with her:
'Is this how Christians are, and is this how they keep oaths?
Do you not remember what I went through for you in the beginning?
359 in the beginning I took you from your parents' house as a slave;
356 in the beginning I took you as a slave but I made you my lady wife;
358 but your decisions have been fulfilled and your wishes have been done.
Never have I been resisted by general or by governor;
they have never spoken to me against my will—let no man boast of that—
but my desire for you forced me to go to the land of the Romans.
For you, lady wife, I renounced my faith
and my wonderful sons and came with you—
and now you mistreat me and plot against me!
Your five brothers wish to kill me—

357 and now you have me for a slave

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in 355 harps on the feeling that defeat in battle is at least not as bad as defeat by a woman. His mother's feelings and even words are coming through; cf. 271–2.

360: Again, back to the original contention (149; hence I read, as there, στρατηγός for E στράτιος).

364: I read this, basing myself on 240, for A τοὺς θαυμαστοὺς ἀγούρους μου: the Emir has renounced his sons but not his bodyguard (200), and a scribal slip from the one word to the other is easily accounted for.

Πάντως ἂν σύρω τὸ σπαθὶν καὶ σφάξω τὸν ἑαυτόν μου,
αὔριον νὰ σὲ ὀνειδίζουσιν οἱ εὐγενεῖς Ρωμαῖοι,
ὅτι τὸν εἶχες εἰς βουλὴν καὶ ἐκεῖνος πάλι ἐσέναν

. . .

Τοὺς ἄνδρας κτείνει μάχαιρα, τὰ δὲ κοράσια ὁ ῞Αδης.
'Αλλά, ψυχή μου, ὀμμάτια μου, καρδιά μου, ἀναπνοή μου,
μὴν τὸ θλιβῆς γὰρ λέγω σε, μὴ τὸ καρδιοπονέσῃς.
῾Η ἀγάπη γὰρ μὲ ἀνάγκασεν, πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας,
τῆς ταπεινῆς μου τῆς μητρὸς καὶ ὅλων τῶν συγγενῶν μου·
θέλω νὰ πάω νὰ τοὺς ἰδῶ καὶ πάλι νὰ ὑποστρέψω·
εἴδασι γὰρ ‹τὰ› ὀμμάτια μου τὰ δάκρυα τῆς μητρός μου.
Καὶ μά τὸν φοβερὸν κριτήν, τὸν τρέμει πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις, 378
τὸν τρέμουν οἱ Σαρακηνοὶ καὶ οἱ Χριστιανοὶ οἱ πάντες,
δώδεκα νυκτοήμερα νὰ ποιήσω εἰς τὰ ἐδικά μου
καὶ ἄλλα εἰκοσιτέσσερα ὥστε νὰ πάγω νά 'ρθω.»
Καὶ τότε τὸ κοράσιον βαρέα ἀναστενάζει:
«Μάρτυρας νὰ εἶναι ὁ ῞Ηλιος ὁ φαίνων εἰς τὸν κόσμον:
ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας μὲ ἔδειξες τὸ γράμμαν τῆς μητρός σου
καὶ ἀπότες ἐμολόγησες τὰ κρυφά σου μυστήρια,
ἂν τὰ εἶπα ἐγὼ τῶν ἀδελφῶν ἢ ἀνθρώπου γεννημένου,
νὰ τύχω εἰς θάνατον πικρόν, τὸν ποῖον οὐδὲν ἐλπίζω,
καὶ νὰ τὸ στερηθῶ τὸ φῶς τοῦ λάμποντος ῾Ηλίου.»
Καὶ τότε τὸ κοράσιον ἐστράφηκεν ὀπίσω,
τῶν ἀδελφῶν της ἔλεγεν μετὰ κακῆς καρδίας:
«῎Αρτι, ἀδέλφια μου καλά, διατί νὰ τὸν λυπᾶτε;
Διατί τὸν ὀνειδίζετε καὶ ἦλθεν λυπημένος;
Κλαίοντα καὶ ὀδυρόμενος κεῖται εἰς τὸ κλινάριν
καὶ ἀποφυσᾶ ὡς ἡ θάλασσα καὶ βρουχᾶται ὡς λέων,
καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ τῆς θλίψεως θέλει χαθῆ ἀπ' τὸν κόσμον.

καὶ ὡς δι' αὗτον ὑπαγαίνω.

367–8: An extreme threat which does yet acknowledge some ecumenical sense of fair play.

After 369: There is probably one line missing: its content is easily inferred, and checked with G 2.200.

373: The echo of 362 making, in this context, a battle between πόθος and

but for sure, if I draw my sword and slay myself,
tomorrow the Roman nobles will reproach you
that he who was in your confidence and you in his
was betrayed by you his wife.
Men are slain by the sword, and only maids by Hades.
But, my soul, my eyes, my heart, my breath,
do not grieve at this, I tell you, do not be pained at heart.
For love has imposed necessity upon me for a few days,
love of my poor mother and all my kin:
I wish to go to see them and then come back again;
for my eyes have seen my mother's tears.
But by the fearsome Judge, at whom all Creation trembles,
Saracens and Christians tremble all,
I shall spend twelve days and nights at my own house,
and take another twenty-four for the journey there and back.'
And then the girl made a deep groan:
'May the Sun be my witness, who shines on the whole world:
since the day you showed me your mother's letter
and since you told me your confidences,
if I have told them to my brothers or to any man alive,
may I come to a bitter end, such as I never foresaw
and may I be deprived of the light of the blazing Sun.'
And then the girl went back
and told her brothers, sore at heart:
'Well then, why do you grieve him, good brothers?
Why do you reproach him, so that he came to me grieving?
Weeping and lamenting he lies on the bed
and blows like the sea and roars like a lion,
and in his affliction he would vanish from the world.

377 and for that I am going

ἀγάπη.

377: A characteristic explanatory filler by the scribe.

379: The phrase is the equivalent of the *Cid*'s 'moros e christianos' (e.g. 1242).

383–8: The sun-born girl swears by the Sun.

Πάντως μετὰ θελήσεώς σας τὸν ἐπῆρα ἄνδρα·
ἐρνήθηκεν τὴν πίστιν του καὶ Χριστιανὸς ἐγένη,
εἰς Ρωμανίαν ἐξέβηκεν διὰ ἐμὲν καὶ σᾶς τοὺς πέντε
καὶ ἐδὰ παραπονεῖτέ τον καὶ ἐμέναν ὀνειδίζει.
Καὶ αὐτὸς ἐμέναν ἔδειξεν τὸ γράμμαν τῆς μητρός του
καὶ ἐμέναν κατεθάρρεψεν καὶ τὰς βουλάς του μοῦ εἶπεν:
μητρὸς κατάραν θλίβεται καὶ θέλει νὰ ὑπάγη.
Καὶ ἐσεῖς πῶς ἐφυλάξατε κατάραν τῆς μητρός σας,
ὅταν ἐκατεφθάσατε τὴν ἄκραν τῆς κλεισούρας;
Θανεῖν οὐκ ἐφοβήθητε διὰ τὴν μητρὸς κατάραν.»
Τὰ ἀδέλφιά της λέγουσιν λόγους παρηγορίας:
«Ἐμεῖς ἐσέναν ἔχομεν ζωὴν καὶ ἀναπνοήν μας
καὶ ὡς δι' αὖτον τὸ θλιβόμεθεν, μὴ πάγη καὶ ἀπομείνη·
ὅμως ἂν βούλεται ἀπελθεῖν, . . .
νὰ ἰδῆ καὶ τὴν μητέραν του καὶ πάλιν νὰ διαγείρη,
ὅτι νὰ ἔρθη τὸ γοργὸν ἐμᾶς ἄς μᾶς ὀμόση,
νὰ μὴ γενῆ Σαρακηνὸς καὶ ἐσὲν ἀλησμονήση.
Καὶ νὰ τὸν ἀποβγάλωμεν καὶ ὁ Θεὸς νὰ τὸν βοηθήση.»
Οἱ πέντε ἀντάμα ἐστάθησαν μετὰ τῆς ἀδελφῆς των
καὶ εἰς τὸ κουβούκλιν ἤμπασιν, 's τὴν κλίνην τοῦ
γαμπροῦ τους,
καὶ ηὕρασιν τὸν νεώτερον κειτόμενον 's τὴν κλίνην·
τὸν γρόθον του εἰς τὸ μάγουλον εἶχεν ἀκουμπισμένον,
τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς του ἠγρίωσεν ὡς λέων πειρασμένος·
τὰ δάκρυα του ἐκατέβαιναν ὡς ὄμβροι τοῦ Μαΐου.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν ὁ νεώτερος τοὺς γυναικαδελφούς του,
γοργὸν ἐκατεπήδησεν καὶ προσυπήντησέ τους.
Ἐκεῖνοι τὸν ἐλάλησαν λόγους ἡμερωμένους:
«Μὴ θλίβεσαι, νεώτερε, ἕνεκεν τῆς μητρός σου.
Χθὲς ἐκαβαλικεύσαμεν ἀμάδι καὶ οἱ πέντε

καὶ ἠξεύρετε καλὰ ὅτι δι' ἐμέναν

397: A filler.

399: Tugging on their heart-strings, with the claim that the Emir came to Romania partly for them (out of respect for their valour); RA 778–85 attests a close relationship between the Emir and Constantine.

For sure, it was with your consent that I took him as my husband;
that he renounced his faith and became a Christian,
and came to the land of the Romans for me—and the five of you;
but now you are making him sad, and he reproaches me!
But he has shown me a letter from his mother,
and reassured me and told me his plans:
it is because he is afflicted by his mother's curse that he wishes to go.
And you, how did you guard against a mother's curse,
when you reached the edge of the pass?
You were not afraid to die rather than suffer a mother's curse.'
The brothers spoke to her words of consolation:
'You are life and breath to us,
and so we are afflicted lest he go away and stay there.
But if he wishes to leave
and see his mother and then return,
let him swear to us that he will come back at once
and not turn Saracen and forget you.
Let us send him off, and may God be with him.'
The five stayed with their sister
and went into the chamber, to their brother-in-law's bed,
and found the young man lying on the bed.
His fist was resting against his cheek;
his eyes were wild like those of a lion annoyed;
his tears fell like May rains.
And when the young man saw his wife's brothers
he leapt up at once and went to meet them.
They spoke to him gentle words:
'Do not be afflicted for your mother, young man.
Yesterday the five of us rode together

397 and you well know that for me

403–5: This time the girl invokes the argument of 2 against the brothers.
410: We could supplement with 373: πρὸς ὀλίγας ἡμέρας.
415: The brothers find the Emir, by a turn of events, as they found their sister (178–82).

ὡς διὰ νὰ κυνηγήσωμεν τίποτε τῶν ἀγρίων·
καὶ εἴδαμεν ἀπὸ μακρά, πέραν τοῦ ποταμίου:
παλουκωσίες ἠστέκοντα δεμένα τὰ φαρία.
Καὶ οἱ πέντε ἐπιλαλήσαμεν καὶ ἐπήγαμεν νὰ ἰδοῦμεν.
Καὶ ηὕραμεν τοὺς Σαρακηνούς, εὐγενεῖς Ἀραβίτας·
οἱ μὲν λουρικιασμένοι ἦσαν, ἄλλοι σουσανιασμένοι
καὶ ἐκράτουν εἰς τὰ χέρια των κοντάρια καὶ ραβδία,
πράσινα μακρυκόνταρα δεμένα μὲ τ' ἀσήμιν.
Καὶ εἰς μίαν τοὺς ἐγνωρίσαμεν ὅτι ὡς διὰ ἐσέναν ἦλθαν,
διὰ ἐσέναν ἐκοπίασαν ἀπέσω ἀπὸ Συρίαν,
ἵνα σὲ ἐπάρουσιν κρυφῶς, νὰ ὑπάγης μετὰ κείνους.
Καὶ κατὰ τὴν ὑπόληψιν ἤλθαμεν εἰς ἐσέναν,
καὶ μὴ μᾶς μέφεσαι, γαμπρέ, διατὶ σὲ ἀγριομιλοῦμεν.
Καὶ ἂν θέλης πᾶν εἰς τὴν Συρίαν, θέλομεν νὰ ὀμόσης,
τῆς κόρης νὰ μὴν λησμονῆς, τῆς ἡλιογεννημένης,
καὶ τοῦ παγκάλου σου υἱοῦ, τοῦ Διγενῆ τ' Ἀκρίτη.
Καὶ μηδὲν σοῦ φανῆ κακὸν διατὶ ὀνειδίσαμέν σε,
ἀμὴ ἔβγαλέ την τὴν κακὴν καρδίαν ἀπὸ τὸν νοῦν σου
καὶ ἔχε ἡμερότηταν, μᾶλλον δὲ καὶ πραότην,
νὰ εἶσαι καὶ πανεύφημος 'ς ὅλην τὴν οἰκουμένην.
Καὶ ἐμεῖς νὰ σὲ ἀποβγάλωμεν καὶ ὁ Θεὸς νὰ σὲ βοηθήση,
ὁποὺ τὸν κόσμον διακρατεῖ καὶ πάντας ἐπιβλέπει·
καὶ πάλιν νὰ ὑποστραφῆς, νὰ ἔλθης διασυντόμως.
Εἰ δὲ καὶ βούλεσαι, γαμπρέ, ἄλλον ‹νὰ› μὴ ὑποστρέψης
καὶ ν' ἀρνηθῆς τὸ ἀδέλφι μας, ‹τὴν ἡλιογεννημένην›,
ἢ τὸ ἄνθος, τὸν αὐγερινόν, τὸν διγενή σου παῖδαν,
ἐλπίζομεν εἰς τὸν Θεόν, ὁποὺ τοὺς πάντας βλέπει,
ἄλλον νὰ μὴ ἴδης τὴν Συρίαν, ἂν οὐδὲν ὑποστρέψης.»

καὶ ἐπήγαμεν εἰς τὸ Χαλκοπέτριν,

426: I take this to be a gloss, specifying what is adequately explained in 428; and just as the brothers set out without revealing their intentions (334), they are concealing from the Emir that they set out for a certain place, and lying about why they went there (427).

431–4: Very much of the type of the descriptions in the *Cid* (e.g. 1966–71).

to hunt wild beasts;
and we saw that far off, on the other side of the river,
steeds were standing tied to posts.
And the five of us urged on our horses and went to look;
and we found Saracens, noble Arabians.
Some were wearing breastplates, others chain-mail,
and in their hands they held lances and staves,
long green lances bound with silver.
And at once we could see that they had come for you,
had made their way from Syria for you,
to take you in secret with them.
And we came to you, as we thought best—
and do not blame us, brother-in-law, for speaking roughly to you.
But if you wish to go to Syria, we want you to swear
not to forget the maid, the sun-born one,
or your handsome son, Digenes Akrites.
And do not be offended that we reproached you;
but remove soreness at heart from your mind,
and possess gentleness and, yet more, meekness,
that you may be of good fame throughout the world.
And we shall send you off, and may God be with you
who rules over the world and watches over all men;
and may you return and be back soon.
But brother-in-law, if you are planning not to return,
and to renounce our sister, the sun-born maid,
or the flower, the morning star, your son of double ancestry,
we hope in God, who watches over all things,
that you may not see Syria again if you do not return here.'

426 and we went to Chalkopetrin

445–6: These verses rather feebly generalize a particular situation and may be interpolated.

451: My supplement; cf. e.g. 441 and also the term of 452 αὐγερινόν.

452: The more natural sense, given the syntax; but not to be distinguished rigidly from 'Digenes' as a proper name.

Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος βαρέως ἀναστενάζει,
καὶ ἐπήδησαν τὰ δάκρυα του, τοιοῦτον λόγον λέγει:
«Κύριε, ἐὰν ἐγὼ ἐνθυμηθῶ ἐσᾶς νὰ λησμονήσω

. . .

ἢ τὸ ἄνθος τὸ ἐκλεκτόν, τὸν διγενή μου παῖδα,
καὶ ἂν οὐ διαγείρω ἐγλήγορα μετὰ καὶ τῆς μητρός μου,
νὰ ἐπάρω καὶ τ' ἀδέλφια μου, νὰ ἔλθουν μετὰ ἐμέναν,
νὰ πάρω καὶ τὸ πλοῦτος μου καὶ τὰ φαρία μου ὅλα,
νὰ ἐβγάλω καὶ τὰ ἀμάλωτα ὁποὺ εἶναι εἰς τὴν Συρίαν,
μὴ ἰδῶ τὸν ἥλιον λάμποντα μηδὲ τὸ φῶς τοῦ κόσμου.»
Καὶ πάραυτα ηὐτρέπισαν, ἵνα τὸν ἀποβγάλουν
οἱ πέντε οἱ γυναικαδελφοὶ καί ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης·
καὶ κονομᾶται ὁ νεώτερος, ἵνα καβαλικεύσῃ.
Ἐσέβη εἰς τὸ κουβούκλιν του, τὴν κόρην νὰ φιλήσῃ·
τὰ δάκρυα του ἐκατέβαιναν ὡς ὄμβροι τοῦ Μαΐου·
οἱ στεναγμοί του ἔβγαιναν ὡσὰν βρονταὶ καὶ κτύποι,
καὶ μὲ τὰ δάκρυα τὰ πολλά, τοὺς ἀναστεναγμούς του,
ἐλάλησεν ὁ νεώτερος τὴν πολυποθητήν του:
«Δός μου, φῶς μου ἀνέσπερον, χρυσόμορφέ μου εἰκόνα,
τὸ δακτυλίδιν τὸ φορεῖς εἰς τὸ μικρὸ δακτύλιν,
νὰ τὸ ἔχω διὰ ἐνθύμησιν, κυρά, νὰ σοῦ θυμοῦμαι.»
Τὸ δακτυλίδιν ἤβγαλεν, γλήγορα τοῦ τὸ δίδει
καὶ ὁ νεώτερος τὸ ἔβαλεν μετὰ πολλῶν δακρύων.
Καὶ λόγια τὸν ἐλάλησεν ἐκ στεναγμοῦ καρδίας:
«Εὕρῃ σε ὁ Θεός, αὐθέντη μου, ἂ μὲ ἀπαλησμονήσῃς
ἢ πάλιν ἂν ἐνθυμηθῇς ἄλλην νὰ περιλάβῃς.»
Καὶ τότε ἐπεριλάβασιν καὶ ἐθέκαν 'ς τὸ κουβούκλιν·
στρεφνά, γλυκιὰ ἐφιλήσασιν τῆς ἀποχωρισίας.
Καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκαβαλίκευσε, ἐκ τὸν οἶκον του ἀποβγαίνουν·

457: He brings the brothers themselves into the formula, in a diplomatic gesture; a verse referring to the wife specifically has probably dropped out.

459–62: He goes on to make a much more handsome offer than keeping his original promise. 462 presumably means the hostages at Raqquah, not those in the whole of Syria; but cf. the note on 567.

471: The taking of the ring shows that the wife really is more than one of the

And then the young man made a deep groan,
and his tears leapt up and thus he spoke:
'Lord, if ever I think to forget you

. . .

or that choice flower, my son of double ancestry;
and if I do not return with my mother,
and take my brothers with me,
and take my wealth and all my steeds,
and release the prisoners of war that are in Syria,
may I not see the sun shining nor the world's light.'
And then they made ready to send him off,
the five brothers-in-law and Digenes Akrites,
and the youth made ready to ride.
He went into his chamber to give the maid a kiss;
his tears fell like May rains;
his sighs came like thunder and blows;
and with his many tears and his many sighs,
the young man spoke to the one of his desire:
'My unsetting light, my lovely golden icon, give me
the ring you wear on your little finger,
that I may have it as a memento, lady, that I may have you to mind.'
She took off the ring and quickly gave it to him;
and the young man put it on with many a tear.
And she spoke to him with a sigh from the heart:
'May God find you out, my lord, if you forget me—
or if you think to embrace another woman.'
And then they embraced and lay in the chamber:
tightly, sweetly they kissed their parting kiss.
And then he mounted and they came out of his house;

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many πολυπόθητα of 302.

478–9: A note of realism, wise in view of 232–9; it leads to their lengthy embrace, holding up the journey (466).

482–3: An echo of the procession of 205–7, with a sense of suspense that the marriage is in jeopardy.

ὀμπρὸς ὑπᾶν τ' ἀδέλφια της καὶ οἱ συγγενεῖς ὀπίσω·
καὶ ὄνταν ἀποχαιρέτησεν τοὺς γυναικαδελφούς του,
ὀπίσω ἐστοχάζετον διὰ τὴν ποθητήν του
καὶ ἀναστέναζεν πικρῶς ὡς ὅσον ἐδυνέτον·
καὶ τοὺς ἀγούρους του ἔλεγεν: «'Αγοῦροι, ἐνδυναμοῦσθε·
ποτὲ μηδὲν ὀκνήσετε, μὴ νύκταν μηδὲ ἡμέραν,
ὡς διὰ νὰ γείρω ἐγλήγορα ὡς διὰ τὴν ποθητήν μου.
Βροχάς, χειμῶνας, παγετοὺς πάντες ἀγωνισθῆτε
καὶ πάντα ἔχετε τὸν νοῦν εἰς τὰς στενὰς κλεισούρας,
μὴ ἀργήσω καὶ μὴ 'φιορκισθῶ καὶ λυπηθῇ ἡ ψυχή μου.»
Καὶ ὁ ἀμιρὰς ἐκίνησεν, τὴν στράταν του ὑπαγαίνει·
ἔρωταν εἶχεν περισσὸν ὡς διὰ τὴν ποθητήν του.
Καὶ διὰ τὴν μητέραν του καὶ διὰ τοὺς ἀδελφούς του
τρεῖς καβαλάρους ἔστειλεν, διὰ νὰ ὑπᾶν μαντάτον.
Καὶ τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας του ἐχέρισεν νὰ λέγῃ
καὶ τοὺς ἀγούρους του ἔλεγεν, τὰ τέτοια τῶν ἐλάλει:
« . . . 'Αγοῦροι μου, ἂν θυμᾶσθε,
τὸ πῶς σᾶς ὑπεξέβαλα ἀπὸ πολλῶν πολέμων·
Πάντως, ἀγοῦροι μου, εἴδατε, εἰς τὰ Μυλοκοπεῖα,
ὅταν ἐφθάσαν στρατηγοὶ καὶ ἐπῆραν σας δεμένους
καὶ ἐγὼ ἐκυνήγουν, ἄγουροι, μὲ πέντε παλληκάρια,
μετὰ τοῦ Μούση τὸν υἱὸν καὶ μὲ τὸν 'Αποχάλπην,
τὸν ἔγγοναν τοῦ Μαϊακῆ, καὶ ἄλλους τρεῖς στρατιῶτες·
καὶ ὡς τῶν ἠκούσαμεν φωνὴν καὶ κτύπον τῶν ἁρμάτων,
κατέβημεν χαρζανιστοὶ ἀνάμεσα τὸν κάμπον
καὶ τὰς τέντας εὑρήκαμεν σχοινοκομμένας ὅλας
καὶ ὁ κορνιακτὸς ἐστύλωνεν 'ς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀπάνω·
τὸ πῶς τοὺς ἐπροδράμαμεν καὶ ἐπιάσαμεν κλεισούρας.»
Καὶ μέσον ὁπού ἐδιάβαιναν ἀδιάβατον καλάμιν,

καὶ ὁμοίως καὶ ἡ καλή μου.

487: A first role within the narrative for the trusty lads (199–200).

493: A gloss, introduced to remove an impression of selfishness; no trace of it in G. 495–7. I punctuate with a semi-colon after 495, not after 496: the Emir's mother and brothers cannot be the object of ἔρωτας, though ἀγάπη can cover both erotic and familial love.(So now Alexiou 1987: 59.)

before went her brothers and the kin behind;
and as he said goodbye to his wife's brothers
he gazed behind him after the one of his desire.
And he sighed bitterly, with all his strength,
and spoke to his lads: 'Lads, take strength:
never slack, by night or day,
that I may swiftly return to the one of my desire.
Struggle, all of you, against rains, storms and freezing cold;
and always have your wits about you in the narrow passes,
lest I be delayed and break my oath and my soul be grieved.'
And the Emir set out and went on his way;
great was his love for the one of his desire.
And to his mother and brothers
he sent three horsemen with a message.
And he set to telling of his valiant deeds,
and spoke to his lads and thus addressed them:
'Lads, I dare say you remember
how I helped you to escape from many a battle.
For sure, lads, you saw this at Mylokopeia,
when generals arrived and took you away in bonds.
I was hunting, lads, with five braves,
with the son of Mouses and with Apochalpes,
and with Maïakes' grandson, and three other soldiers;
and when we heard their shout and din of arms
we came down, whipping our horses, into the plain
and found all the tents with their ropes cut;
and the dust was in a pillar to the heavens above.
You saw how we overtook them and took possession of the passes!'
And as they were crossing the middle of a dense reed-bed

493 and my loved one likewise

498ff: With this we step back into a time in which war, not love, was the important thing—and a simpler challenge.

510: Cf. *Cid* 1141–2: 'You could have seen so many ropes cut, / and on all sides tent poles thrown to the ground.'

λεοντάριν εἶδαν δυνατὸν τρώγοντα δαμαλίναν·
καὶ τότε ὡσὰν τὸ εἴδασιν οἱ ἀγοῦροι τοῦ νεωτέρου,
ὀμπρὸς ὀπίσω ἐστράφησαν καὶ ἐπίασαν τὰ πλάγια.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τοῦτον ὁ ἀμιράς, ἄκο τὸ τίντα λέγει:
«Ἂν σὲ ἀφήσω, λέοντα, αὔριον νὰ τὸ καυχᾶσαι
καὶ νὰ μᾶς τ' ὀνειδίζουσιν οἱ θαυμαστοὶ ἀνδρειωμένοι.»
Καὶ σύρνει τὸ σπαθίτσιν του, κόπτει τὴν κεφαλήν του,
. . . καὶ ἔσχισέν τον μέσα.
«Ἀλαλαί,» ἐφώναξεν τὸν πρωτοστράτοράν του·
«πέζευσε σύντομα, γοργόν, νὰ ἐπάρῃς τὸ δερμάτιν,
τὰ ὀδόντια καὶ τὰ ὀνύχια ὅλων τῶν ποδαρίων
καὶ ἀπέκει ἄγωμέτε τα τὸν Διγενὴν Ἀκρίτην,
νὰ τὰ φορῇ, νὰ τὰ θεωρῇ καὶ ἅ λάχῃ μᾶς θυμᾶται.»
Καὶ ὡσὰν ἀπεσώσασιν εἰς τοῦ Ραχὲ τὸ κάστρον,
‹οἱ ἀγοῦροι του› ἐπλικεύσασιν ἀπέξωθεν τοῦ κάστρου·
κ' ἔδραμεν ἡ μητέρα του ἀπέξω ἀπὸ τὸ κάστρον
μετὰ τρεῖς ἄβρας καὶ μὲ τὸ συγγενικόν της ὅλον.
Καὶ ἑβδομήντα γέροντες ἐκ τοῦ Ραχὲ τὸ κάστρον
κανίσκια ὑπάγουσιν τοῦ νέου, ὁποὺ οὐκ ὁρπίζαν νὰ ἴδουν.
Καὶ τότε ἡ μάνα τοῦ ἀμιρᾶ γλυκέα τὸν ἐφίλει· 533/4
οὕτως τὸν ἐπερίλαβεν, καὶ τέτοιον λόγον λέγει:
«Ἀλί, ἀλί μου τὴν ψυχὴν καὶ τὸ κακό μου γῆρας,
ἂν τὸ ἀκούσουν εἰς Αἴγυπτον, κάτω εἰς τὴν Βαβυλῶνα,
ἵνα τὸ ἀναγράψωσιν εἰς τοῦ Μακὲ τὸ μνῆμαν,
ἐσέναν καὶ τὸ γένος μας ἵνα μᾶς καταροῦνται.
Τέκνον μου πολυπόθητον, ‹ψυχή μου, ἀναπνοή μου›
ὀμμάτια μου, καρδία μου, τὸ φῶς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν μου
οὐκ εἶδες, τέκνον μου καλόν, τὸ μνῆμαν τοῦ προφήτου;»

516: For the hero's men's fear of a lion compare *Cid* 2295.

517: 'Hear what was said by...': frequent in E as in the *Cid* e.g. 1603.

518: Even animals may boast; the formula of 51 adapted. A lion is shamed by the hero at *Cid* 2295. The significance of the lion in the narrative here is enhanced by the earlier brief similes used of the Emir (304, 352, 419) and expressing there not his heroic qualities but his sense of frustration. Through slaying the lion now, the Emir fortifies his spirit for the tougher encounter to come with his mother.

they saw a mighty lion eating a heifer.
And when the young man's lads saw it
they turned hither and thither and took to the slopes.
But when the Emir saw this, listen to what he said:
'Lion, if I let you be, tomorrow you will boast,
and all the wonderful men of valour will reproach us.'
And he drew his sword, cut off its head
and tore the beast in two.
'Hurrah!', he shouted to his first officer.
'Dismount at once and take the skin,
the teeth and the claws from all the paws,
and let us take them later to Digenes Akrites,
for him to wear, for him to look at, and perhaps to remember us.'
And when they reached the castle of Raqqah
his lads camped outside the castle.
And his mother came running out of the castle
with three slave-girls and all her kin;
and seventy elders from the castle of Raqqah
brought gifts to the young man whom they had not hoped to see.
And then the Emir's mother sweetly kissed him,
thus embraced him and spoke thus:
'Alas, alas for my soul and my miserable old age
if they hear of it in Egypt, down in Babylon,
to write it up in the Tomb at Mecca,
to curse you and our line.
Child of my desire, my soul, my breath,
my eyes, my heart, light of my eyes,
did you not see the Prophet's Tomb, my good child?'

533–4: I reconstruct A's one verse and two halves thus.

535–41: An utterly unexpected bit of recrimination, not gladness. The poet has the common misconception that the Temple and the Tomb are one and the same; but the custom of giving a document authority by setting it in the Temple is a real one.

539: My supplement from 228.

Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς τῆς μητέρας του λέγει:
«Σώπασε, μήτηρ μου· καλά 'ν' αὐτὰ τὰ συντυχαίνεις;
'Εγὼ ἐγύρευσα Συρίαν, καὶ Ρωμανίαν κατέβην,
ἐγὼ ἀπόσω ἐδιάβηκα χώρας τῶν Αἰθιόπων,
‹καὶ› λόγους ἤκουσα ψευδεῖς καὶ γέλι' ἦσαν καθόλου
καὶ ποτὲ θεοὺς αὐτοὺς οὐδὲν τοὺς λέγω, ὅτι εἴδωλα εἶναι.
. . . 'Αμ' εἰς τὴν Ρωμανίαν
εἶδαν οἱ ὀφθαλμοί μου τὴν πανύμνητον Θεοτόκον·
ὢ καὶ ‹τὸ› τί τὴν ἀγαπῶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ψυχῆς μου,
καὶ εἶδα, μάνα μου, νεκροὺς κ' ἐτρέχαν τὸ ἅγιον μύρος.
Ἡ πίστις ἡ ἀληθινή, οἱ Χριστιανοὶ τὴν ἔχουν, 553
καὶ ὁ Παράδεισος αὐτὸς εἰς Ρωμανίαν ἔναι! 552
Καὶ ὁποὺ θέλει νὰ ἐλθῇ, ἂς ἔλθῃ μετὰ μέναν,
νὰ ἀκολουθήσῃ σύντομα, σύντομα νὰ ὑπαγαίνω,
καὶ ὅσοι οὐδὲν θέλουν νὰ ἐλθοῦν ἐδῶ ἂς ἀπομείνουν.
Σὺ δέ, μήτηρ γλυκεῖα μου, ψυχῆς παρηγορία,
ἔμπροσθέν μου ὑπάγαινε, νὰ ὑπάγω εἰς τὴν καλήν μου·
εἰ δέ, μήτηρ, καὶ οὐκ ἔρχεσαι, εὔχου μου ὅτι ὑπαγαίνω.»
Καὶ τότε ἡ μητέρα του, ἄκο καὶ τί τοῦ λέγει:
«Τέκνον μου ποθεινότατον, ἔρχομαι ὅπου θέλεις·
ἔρχομαι διὰ τὸ σπλάχνον σου καὶ τὴν πολλήν σου ἀγάπην

544–56: It is hard to filter out from the accretions here what will have been in the original Lay: the situation, in which the Emir justifies his move to the land of the Romans, offered an irresistible opportunity for scribal piety—G has 88 lines at this point. The passage as it stands fits neither the economy nor the outlook of the Lay as a whole. The Emir is no militant Christian: his reason for conversion is erotic love; he still harbours suspicions of Christians (354); and his monotheism (378) is not exclusively Christian; the Ethiopians are a literary fantasy, far distant from the realistic setting. The key to the speech, I believe—with the rest having grown inexorably around it—is the reference to Paradise; this not in any sense of an after–life, but—almost blasphemously—as the symbol of Love, as it appears in the snatch of song at RA 841 and elsewhere in the vernacular poetry. There are striking examples in the love poetry of the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries (Pernot 1931:36): 'and let him fall asleep in a beautiful embrace / and let him think of

And then the Emir said to his mother:
'Hush, mother—is it right what you say?
I have been all over Syria and into the land of the Romans;
I have travelled through the lands of the Ethiopians;
and I have heard false doctrines, and they were utterly laughable,
and them I never call gods, for they are idols.
But in the land of the Romans
my eyes have seen the hymned Mother of God
—oh, and I love her with all my heart!—
and, mother, I have seen corpses from which holy myrrh was flowing.
553 The true faith is that of the Christians,
552 and Paradise itself is in the land of the Romans!
And whoever wishes to come, let him come with me
and follow soon; soon I shall be on my way—
all those who do not wish to come, let them stay here.
But you, sweet mother, my heart's solace,
come with me that I may go to my loved one—
and if you will not come, mother, then give me your parting blessing.'
And then his mother, listen to what she said to him:
'Child of my desire, I shall go wherever you wish;
I shall go out of pity for you and out of my great love for you;

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paradise' or 'You have become a paradise, I long for you, mistress, / to take from your leaves, to eat of your fruit, / to drink from your spring, for my heart to be cooled.' The sense of this passage of the Lay, then, may have been: 'I have been all over Muslim and Christian lands—but (earthly) Paradise is to be found in the latter'; this goes with the address to the girl as an 'icon' at 472. The main premise of LE is that religious affiliation is less important than one might suppose; but scribes have wanted to expatiate on the theme of religious conflict for its own sake. The Emir, it is true, makes a blunt declaration of affiliation at 553; but he is no theologian, even if for purposes of general harmony he carries out at the end the unnecessary step of baptizing his company.

559: Strictly, this fall-back position is contrary to 459; it is probably an attempt to pull on his mother's feelings.

ἀρνοῦμαι καὶ τὸ γένος μου, ‹καὶ ὅλην μου τὴν Συρίαν›,
ἀρνοῦμαι καὶ τὸν Μαχουμέτ, τὸν μέγαν μας προφήτην.
Ἀλλ καὶ τί μὲ ἐποίησες, ἀλλ καὶ τί μὲ ἐποῖκες!»
Καὶ πάραυτα ὁ ἀμιρὰς πηδᾶ, καβαλικεύγει,
μὲ τὸν λαὸν καὶ ἀγούρους του πηδᾶ, καβαλικεύγει·
καὶ ἀπεσύναξεν αὐτὸς πᾶσαν αἰχμαλωσίαν
καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν αὐτὰ τὴν πολυποθητήν του
καὶ μετὰ τὰ ἀμάλωτα ἄριφνους ἀνδρειωμένους.
Καὶ ἐχώρισεν καὶ ἐφόρτωσεν καμήλια κἂν διακόσια,
κἂν ἑκατὸν μουλάρια ἀσήμιν καὶ χρυσάφιν 573
καὶ ἐφόρτωσεν ὁ ἀμιρὰς ὁλόχρυσα βλατία.
Καὶ πάλιν διεχώρισεν κἂν ἑκατὸν φαρία,
ὅλα καλὰ καὶ θαυμαστά, σελοχαλινωμένα,
καὶ ἐκίνησεν ὁ ἀμιρὰς εἰς Ρωμανίαν νὰ ὑπάγῃ.
Καὶ πάλιν διεχώρισεν χιλίους Ἀραβίτας,
ὁλολουρίκους καὶ καλούς, χρυσοκλιβανιασμένους,
ὡς διὰ νὰ περιπατοῦν ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ ἀγούρου
καὶ ἄλλες κἂν χιλιάδες δύο τὸν ἀμιρὰν ἀντάμα.

. . .

Καὶ ἡ κόρη μὲ τὸν ἄγουρον μόνοι των 's τὸ κουβούκλιν 583
φιλοῦν καὶ οἱ βάγιες ραίνουν τους μετὰ ροδοσταμάτων
καὶ ἐδρόσιζαν τὰ χείλη των ἐκ τὸν γλυκὺν τὸν πόθον.
Καὶ τότε ὡς τὸ ἤκουσαν οἱ γυναικαδελφοί του,

εἰς τοῦ Παγδᾶ ὑπαγαίνει·

563: My supplement from 253.

565: There is psychological realism in this return to protest.

567: I delete the first of the two verses which make up 568: (i) how can the long journey from Raqqah to Baghdad and back be made in the time originally promised by the Emir? (ii) how can the Emir be in a position to release prisoners from Baghdad when he has renounced his office and earned widespread hatred? (One might add the question why the arrival of the prisoners—a joyful occasion—is not mentioned at the end of LE; and perhaps rest with the suspicion that these verses and 462 have been foisted into the original.)

and I renounce my line and all my land of Syria,
and I renounce Muhammad our great Prophet.
Alas what you have done to me! Alas what you have done to me!'
And then the Emir mounted and rode;
with his company and his lads he mounted and rode;
and he released all the prisoners of war
and he sent them all to the one of his desire,
and among the prisoners of war numberless valiant men.
And he picked out and loaded up some two hundred camels
and some hundred mules with silver and gold;
and the Emir loaded them with tapestries all of gold.
And then he picked out some hundred steeds,
all fine and wonderful, saddled and bridled,
and the Emir set out for the land of the Romans.
And then he picked out a thousand Arabians,
all fine men with breastplates, wearing golden armour,
to go in front of his young self;
and another two thousand to go with himself, the Emir.
And soon they reached the house; and he raised a joyful cry:
'Dove, welcome your hawk, and console him for the time he spent abroad!'
And the maid and the young man, alone in the chamber
kissed, and the maids sprayed them with rose-water;
and they cooled their lips of sweet desire.
And when the wife's brothers heard of it

568 goes to Baghdad

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after 581: Some lines are missing at this point (there is a confused remnant, one verse, in E), but the story is clear enough. The corresponding passage of G (2.263–81) links with Constantine's dream (320–5); an eagle might then be more appropriate than a hawk.

585: Desire, by a common metaphor, is seen as being cooled by fulfilment. If, on the other hand, the subject is the maids who sprinkle the lovers, then it is hard to see why lips are emphasized. At any rate, the passage is concerned rather to generate a general atmosphere than to provide a logical sequence; hence the incompatibility, on the face of it, between 583 and 584.

ἐξαίφνης ἐξεπήδησαν ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ κουβούκλιν 588
καὶ τὸν γαμπρόν τους ηὕρηκαν μετὰ τῆς ἀδελφῆς των
καὶ ἐκάμνασιν τὸ ἠξεύρετε, τὸ κάμνουν οἱ ἀγαποῦντες, 590
καὶ ἐντράπησαν τὰ ἀδέλφια της καὶ ἐστάθησαν ἀπέξω
καὶ εἶχαν χαρὰν ἐξαίρετην, χαρὰν πολλὰ μεγάλην.
Τὸν Διγενὴν ἐπῆραν τον οἱ βάγιες καὶ ἤφεράν τον·
τὸ νὰ τὸν ἴδη ὁ ἀμιράς, πιάνει, καταφιλεῖ τον
καὶ ἐθεώρει τον λοιπὸν καὶ ἀποκαμάρωνέν τον
καὶ ἐχαίρετο ὅτι εἶν' ἔμορφος, μετὰ τῆς ποθητῆς του,
ἀμάδι καὶ ἡ μητέρα του καὶ οἱ γυναικαδελφοί του
καὶ ὅλη ἡ συντροφία του καὶ ὅλον τὸ φουσάτον.
Καὶ τὰ γομάρια ἐφθάσασιν ἐκεῖ ὅπου ἐπιθυμοῦσαν, 599/600
τὸ πράγμα εἰς τὸ σπίτιν του καὶ τὰ φαρία 'ς τὸν
στάβλον· 601/2
τοὺς δὲ ἀγούρους τοὺς καλούς, Πέρσας καὶ 'Αραβίτας,
ἔδωσεν ὅλους ὁ ἀμιρὰς φιλοτιμίας μεγάλας
‹καὶ ἐπῆραν› καὶ χαρίσματα ἐκ τὰ πεθερικά του 604a
καὶ ἐξαπέστειλεν αὐτοὺς πάλιν εἰς τὴν Συρίαν. 605
Κἂν 'Αραβίτας ἑκατὸν ἐκράτησεν μετ' αὖτον,
καὶ ἐκράτησεν τὴν μάναν του μετὰ τοὺς ἀδελφούς του
καὶ ἐβάπτισεν ὁ ἀμιρὰς ἅπαντα τὸν λαόν του
καὶ τόπον τοὺς ἐχάρισεν καὶ ἐκάθετο ὁ λαός του.

588 they went running suddenly into the chamber
and found their brother-in-law with their sister,
590 and they were doing what you know lovers do.
And her brothers were embarrassed and stayed outside,
but they felt exceptional joy, great joy.
As for Digenes, the maids took him up and brought him;
and when the Emir saw him, he took him up and kissed him tenderly
595 and looked at him then and surveyed him with pride,
and was glad that he was beautiful; as was the one of his desire
and his mother and his wife's brothers
and all his retinue and the whole army.
599/600 And the beasts of burden arrived at their longed-for destination,
601/2 treasure at the house and steeds at the stable;
and to all his good lads, Persians and Arabians,
the Emir gave good bonuses;
604a and they took gifts from his relatives by marriage
605 and he sent them back to Syria.
Some hundred Arabians he kept with him;
and he kept his mother, and his brothers too.
And the Emir baptized all his company,
and gave them a place to live, and his company settled there.

593–8: The son in his true role here, as far as LE is concerned: reconciler.

606: The Emir keeps only 100 out of 3000 who made the journey home (579–81); the λαός is his retinue, and no movement of populations is described: the lay's subject is the triumph of love over individuals, not that of Christendom over Islam.

Ὁ θαυμαστὸς Βασίλειος, τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνδρειωμένων, 622/3
περὶ ἀπελάτων ἤκουσε εὐγενικῶν καὶ ἀνδρείων,
ὅτι κρατοῦν στενώματα καὶ ποιοῦν ἀνδραγαθίας
καὶ ζῆλος ἦλθεν εἰς αὐτὸν νὰ ἰδῇ τοὺς ἀπελάτας.
Καὶ ἔκατσεν καὶ εὐθείασεν ὡραῖον, τερπνὸν λαβοῦτον·
ἐπῆρέν το καὶ ἐξέβηκεν ἀπὸ τὰ γονικά του
καὶ εἰς μίαν ἐκατέμαθεν καὶ τὰς στενὰς κλεισούρας.
Καὶ ὡς μοναχός του ὑπήγαινεν,
εὗρεν καλάμιν καὶ νερὸν καὶ ἦτον ἀπέσω λέων

Καὶ τότε τὸ παιδὶν ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης
ἀναθρέφετον ὡς πρέπει καὶ ὡς ἀξιάζει
καὶ ὡς ἥλιος ἔλαμπεν τὸ πρόσωπόν του
καὶ ὡς κυπαρίσσιν ἀνατρέφετον τὴν ἅπασαν ἡμέραν
καὶ ἔκανεν χέριν καὶ νὰ δύνεται ὥσπερ καὶ ἀνδρειωμένος.
Ὅ,τι ἐδύνετον κρατεῖν τὸ χαλινάριν, ἐπῆρεν κοντάριν καὶ ραβδίν,
νὰ ὑπάγῃ μὲ τοὺς κυνηγούς, ὡς διὰ νὰ περιδιαβάσῃ.
Κ' ἐθώρει τὸ παιδόπουλον τὸ πλῆθος τῶν θηρίων
καὶ ἐκατέβηκεν τὸ παιδὶν εἰς τὴν μέσην τῶν θηρίων.
Ἐδὰ ἂς σᾶς ἀφηγήσωμαι περὶ τὰς ἀμωρίας του.
Ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ ἔδωσεν εὐτυχίαν εἰς τὴν πολλήν του ἀνδρείαν
καὶ ὅπου καὶ ἂν τύχῃ ποιεῖ ἀνδραγαθίας.

610–21: The MS contains this unmetrical introduction in an attempt to turn the poem into an episode of a longer narrative; A relegates it to an appendix.

622–3: To be called Basil does not distinguish Akrites from others; indeed 678 might be taken to show that the hero just called himself Basil here in order to travel incognito: EA 1216 shows that, in a more developed account of the defeat of the raiders by Akrites at least, his reputation had preceded him. It may be the

AKRITES AMONG THE RAIDERS

The wonderful Basil, the light of the brave
heard of raiders noble and valiant,
how they held passes and performed valiant deeds.
And zeal to see the raiders came over him.
And he sat and made a fine, lovely lute;
he took it and left his parents' house
and in no time learned his way round the narrow passes.
And as he went on his way alone
he found a reed-bed and water and in there was a lion;

And the child, Digenes Akrites,
grew up as is right and proper,
and his countenance shone like the sun,
and he grew like a cypress every day,
and he started to be as strong as the valiant one he was.
When he was able to hold the reins he took lance and club
to go with the huntsmen on an excursion.
And the little child saw the multitude of the beasts,
and the little child went into the midst of the beasts.
Here let me tell you about his childhood deeds.
God gave him happiness in his great valour,
and wherever he was he performed valiant deeds.

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case, then, that these two introductory verses have suffered some corruption.

624: Not ironical: Akrites will simply show that, in these rather limited terms, he is nobler and braver; so too 636.

627: It may be that the lute, as much as the club, is part of the iconography of Akrites (for which see Frantz 1940/1)—hence its apparently purposeless appearance here (contrast RA 827ff)

κ' εἶχεν γροθέαν ἐξηστρεπτὴν ἀπὸ Γιαννάκη χέρια.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τὸν λέοντα ὁ Διγενὴς 'Ακρίτης,
ἀπὸ καρδίας ἐστέναξεν, ἐκ βάθους τῆς ψυχῆς του:
«Πότε νὰ ἰδοῦν τὰ ὀμμάτια μου τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀπελάτων,
νὰ γομωστοῦν τὰ ὀμμάτια μου τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀπελάτων!»
Τὸν νεροφόρον ηὕρηκεν, τὸν εἶχαν οἱ ἀπελάτες,
καὶ εὐθὺς τὸν ἀνερώτησεν ὁ Διγενὴς 'Ακρίτης:
«Τὸν Θεόν, καλὲ νεώτερε, ποῦ μένουν οἱ ἀπελάτες;»
Καὶ ὁ νεροφόρος τότε δὲ τὸν Διγενὴν ἐλάλει:
«Τὸν Θεόν, καλὲ νεώτερε, τί τοὺς καταγυρεύγεις;»
«Γυρεύγω καὶ κατερωτῶ νὰ εἶμαι καὶ ἐγὼ ἀπελάτης,
ἵνα ρογεύωμαι καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ τῶν ἀπελάτων.»
Καὶ ἐκεῖνος τότε ἀπῆρεν τον, 's τὸ ληστάρχεῖον ὑπάγει.
'Εκεῖ ηὗρεν τὸν Φιλοπαπποὺν καὶ ἐκείτετο εἰς κλινάριν·
πολλῶν θηρίων δέρματα εἶχεν ἀπάνω κάτω,
τὸν λέοντα καὶ τὸν σύαγρον εἶχεν προσκεφαλάδιν.
Καὶ ὑπόκυψεν ὁ νεώτερος καὶ χαμηλὰ ἐπροσκύναν.
Καὶ ὁ γέρων ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς οὕτως τὸν ἀπεκρίθην:
«Καλῶς ἦλθες, νεώτερε, ἂν οὐκ εἶσαι προδότης.»
Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος οὕτως ἀπιλογᾶται:
«Ὢ μὰ τὸν Θεόν, Φιλοπαππού, οὐδὲν εἶμαι ἐγὼ προδότης·
γυρεύγω καὶ κατερωτῶ νὰ εἶμαι καὶ ἐγὼ ἀπελάτης,
ἵνα ρογεύγωμαι καὶ ἐγὼ μετὰ τῶν ἀπελάτων.»
Καὶ ὁ γέρων ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς οὕτως τὸν ἀπεκρίθην:
«Θεωρῶ σε, κύρκα, ὑπόλυγνον καὶ ὡς ἀχαμνὰ ζωσμένον
καὶ χαμηλὰ ἡ ποδέα σου καὶ οὐ ποιεῖς ἐσὺ ἀπελάτης.

καὶ τρίτον τὸν ἐγύρισεν καὶ ἐμπασίαν οὐκ ηὗρεν

632: The MS contains this line which indicates that some confusion has occurred, and what we have is probably a vestige of a short passage about an impassable reed-bed (cf. LE 513: ἀδιάβατον καλάμιν), which sheds further light on the capabilities of the raiders. We might take it that one or two verses have dropped out with an explanatory phrase like RDA 1717: κ' ἦτον ὁ κάλαμος δασύς; see also RA 786: λέοντα δεινὸν εἶδασιν ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ καλάμιν.

and it had received a back-handed blow at the hands of Giannakes.
And when Digenes Akrites saw the lion
he sighed from his heart, from the depths of his soul:
'When will my eyes see the light of the raiders,
for my eyes to be filled with the light of the raiders?'
He found the raiders' water-bearer,
and straightaway Digenes Akrites asked him:
'In God's name, good youth, where are the raiders staying?'
And then the water-bearer said to Digenes:
'In God's name, good youth, why are you after them?'
'I am after them and asking about them that I too may become a raider,
to be enrolled myself among the raiders.'
And then he took him and went to the robbers' den.
There he found Philopappous, and he was lying on a bed:
he had many beasts' skins all around;
he had lion and boar for his pillow.
And the youth bowed and bent down low.
And old Philopappous thus addressed him:
'Welcome, young man—if you are not an informer.'
And then the youth thus replied:
'Oh, in God's name, Philopappous, I am not an informer:
I am seeking and asking to become a raider myself,
to be enrolled myself among the raiders.'
And old Philopappous thus replied:
'Master, I see you to be a little thin and weakly girded,
and your tunic long—and you won't make a raider.

632 and a third time he circled it round and could find no way in

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633: Giannakes is so well known in tradition, evidently, that his appearance need not be explained; the Giannakés who appears in some MG folk songs (e.g. Academy 1962: 76) surely derives from him rather than being a corruption of 'Digenes'.

644: A salary, hence a sort of professionalism; Akrites disrupts vested interests without rejecting the way of life.

Ἐὰν καυχᾶσαι, νεώτερε, νὰ εἶσαι ἀπελάτης,
δύνασαι ἐπάρῃς τὸ ραβδὶν καὶ κατεβῇς εἰς βίγλαν
καὶ νὰ νηστεύσῃς, νεώτερε, κἂν δεκαπέντε ἡμέρας,
νὰ μήδε φᾶς, νὰ μήδεν πιῇς, νὰ μήδε ὕπνον χορτάσῃς,
καὶ ἀπέκει ὡς λέων νὰ βρουχισθῇς, νὰ ἔβγουν τὰ λεοντάρια,
νὰ ἐπάρῃς τὰ δερμάτια των καὶ ἐδῶ νὰ μὲ τὰ φέρῃς;
Καὶ δύνασαι, νεώτερε, νὰ κατεβῇς εἰς βίγλαν
καὶ νὰ διαβοῦν οἱ ἄρχοντες, μὲ τὸν γαμπρόν, τὴν νύμφην,
καὶ μὲ ὅλον τὸ φουσάτον τους καὶ ἐσὺ νὰ ἐμπῇς εἰς μέσην,
νὰ ἐπάρῃς τὴν νεόνυμφον καὶ ἐδῶ νὰ μὲ τὴν φέρῃς;»
Καὶ τότε δὲ καὶ ὁ Διγενὴς οὕτως τὸν συντυχαίνει:
«Ἄλλα μὲ εἰπέ, Φιλοπαππού, τὰ οὐ δύναμαι νὰ ποίσω·
αὐτά, γέρον, τὰ μὲ λαλεῖς, πέντε χρονῶν τὰ ἐποῖκα.
Ἀμὴ ἀκουσόν μου, γέροντα: ἂν ἦτον ἕναν ρυάκιν,
. . . καὶ μίλιν εἰς τὸ πλάτος,
καὶ διπλοπόδης πάραυτα εἰς μίαν νὰ τὸ πηδήσω,
καὶ τὸν λαγὸν 'ς τ' ἀνήφορον τρίτο νὰ τὸν γυρίσω,
τὴν πέρδικαν ὄντα χαμοπετᾶ, ν' ἀπλώσω νὰ τὴν πάρω.»
Καὶ τότε καὶ ὁ Φιλοπαππoὺς τοιοῦτον λόγον λέγει:
«Σύρετε ἀργυρὸν σελίν, νὰ κάτσῃ ὁ κὺρ Βασίλης.»
Τραπέζιν ἥστεσαν ὀμπρός, νὰ φάγουν καὶ νὰ πίουν.
Καλὰ ἔφαγαν, καλὰ ἔπιαν, καλὰ ἐκαλοψυχῆσαν·
καὶ τότε ἄλλος ἔλεγεν: «Ἐγὼ ἀπαντῶ πενήντα·»
καὶ πάλιν ἄλλος ἔλεγεν: «Ἐγὼ ἀπαντῶ ἑβδομήντα·»
καὶ πάλιν ἄλλος ἔλεγεν: «Ἐγὼ ἀπαντῶ διακόσιους.»
Ὁ νεώτερος ἐκάθετον, ποτέ του οὐκ ἐλάλει·
καὶ ὁ γέρων ὁ Φιλοπαππoὺς τὸν νεώτερον ἐλάλει:
«Ἐσὺ δὲ πόσους δύνασαι, Βασίλη, ἀπαντῆσαι;»
Καὶ τότε δὲ ὁ νεώτερος τὸν γέροντα ἐλάλει:

672–3: There is no problem here about what the passage means (cf ARM 34–40); but I have tried to produce a more likely syntax out of A's μίλιν ἂν ἦτον ἕναν /...ὀρυάκιν εἰς τὸ πλάτος. A phrase to the effect, e.g., that the

Young man, if you boast of becoming a raider,
can you take your staff and go on an ambush,
and fast for a fortnight, young man—
not eat, not drink, not have fill of sleep—
and then roar like a lion so that the lions come out,
and take their hides and bring them to me here?
And, young man, can you go on an ambush
as lords are passing by with groom and bride
and all their army—and you go in the midst of them
and take the newly-wed bride and bring her to me here?'
And then Digenes spoke thus:
'Tell me something, Philopappous, something that I can't do:
these things you speak of, I could do them at the age of five.
Come, listen, old man: if a stream
were . . . and a mile in breadth,
even with my feet together I could jump it in a trice;
and overtake the hare three times even on sloping ground;
and put out my hand and catch the partridge when it is flying low.'
And then Philopappous spoke thus:
'Draw up a silver stool, that master Basil may sit'.
They set up a table before them, for them to eat and drink;
they ate well, they drank well, they had good cheer.
And then one would say, 'I can take on fifty';
and then another would say, 'I can take on seventy';
and then another would say, 'I can take on two hundred'.
The youth sat and never said a word.
But old Philopappous said to the youth:
'And you, Basil—how many can you take on?'
And then the youth said to the old man:

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waters were deep has been lost.

678: An unobtrusive sign that the raiders have accumulated considerable wealth.

«Έναν, ἐὰν ἔναι ὡσὰν ἐμέν, δύναμαι ἀπαντῆσαι,
εἰ δὲ ἔναι δυνατότερος, μὲ δώσῃ καὶ τὸν δώσω.
Καὶ δεῦτε, ἀγοῦροι, ἂς λάβωμεν ὑπόκοντα ραβδία
καὶ ἂς καταβῶμεν ἄπαντες κάτω εἰς τὴν ὁμαλίαν,
ἵνα ἀλλήλους δώσωμεν χωριατικὰς ραβδέας.»
Καὶ τότε ὅλοι ἐπήρασιν ὑπόκοντα ραβδία
καὶ πάραυτα ἐκατέβησαν κάτω εἰς τὴν ὁμαλίαν,
ὅπως ἀλλήλους δώσουσιν χωριατικὰς ραβδέας.
Καὶ τότε δὲ ὁ Διγενὴς ἔριξεν τὸ ραβδίν του·
τοὺς μὲν γροθέας ἔκρουεν, τοὺς ἄλλους σφοντυλέας
καὶ ὁλωνῶν ἐπέσασιν ραβδία τῶν ἀπελάτων
καὶ τὰ ἐφορτώθη ὁ Διγενής, τὸν γέρον τὰ ὑπαγαίνει:
«Παράλαβε, Φιλοπαππού, ραβδία τῶν ἀπελάτων
καὶ ἂν οὐ σοῦ ἀρέσῃ, γέροντα, καὶ ἐσὲ νὰ τὸ ποιήσω.»

'I can fight one, if he is as I am—
but if he is mightier still, let him take me on and I shall take him on.
But come now, lads, let us take short staves,
and let us go, all of us, to a level spot
and fight among ourselves at village staves.'
And then all took short staves
and straightaway went down to the level spot
to fight among themselves at village staves.
And then Digenes hurled his staff to the ground.
Some he smote with his fists, others with the side of his hand;
and the staves fell from the hands of all the raiders
And Digenes picked them up and carried them to the old man:
'Philopappous, take the raiders' staves—
and if you don't like it, old man, I'll do the same to you!'

692: A village game; contrast the attitudes expressed in the more sophisticated poems LE 231 and RA 745.

701: A punch-line, no doubt proverbial. In its small way, it does provide some consequential ending here.

Ὁ ἔρως τίκτει τὸ φιλὶν καὶ τὸ φιλὶν τὸν πόθον,
ὁ πόθος δίδει μέριμνας, ἔννοιάς τε καὶ φροντίδας,
καὶ ἀπειλὴν καὶ κίνδυνον καὶ χωρισμὸν γονέων·
θάλασσαν ἀντιμάχεται, τὸ πῦρ οὐ διαλογίζει
καὶ τίποτε οὐ λογίζεται ὁ ποθῶν διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην·
ἐγκρεμνοὺς οὐ λογίζεται, τοὺς ποταμοὺς οὐδόλως,
τὰς ἀγρυπνίας ἀνάπαυσιν καὶ τὰς κλεισούρας κάμπους.
Καὶ ὅσοι βασανίζεσθε δι' ἀγάπην κορασίου,
ἀκούσατε διὰ γραφῆς ‹ἐκείνων› τῶν Ἑλλήνων
πόσα καὶ αὐτοὶ ὑπομείνασιν βάσανα διὰ τὸν πόθον.
Βλέπετε, οἱ ἀναγινώσκοντες, τοὺς ἀριστεῖς ἐκείνους,
τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοὺς θαυμαστοὺς καὶ ὀνομαστοὺς στρατιώτας,
καὶ ὅλα ὅσα ἐγίνουντα διὰ ἐκείνην τὴν Ἑλένην,
ὅτε ἐκατεπολέμησαν ἅπασαν τὴν Ἀσίαν,
καὶ πάντες ἐδοξάσθησαν διὰ περισσὴν ἀνδρείαν,
καὶ πάλιν εἰς ἐρωτικὰ ἄλλος τις οὐχ ὑπέστη.
Καὶ οὐ λέγομεν καυχίσματα ἢ πλάσματα καὶ μύθους,
ἃ Ὅμηρος ἐψεύσατο καὶ ἄλλοι τῶν Ἑλλήνων.

702–22: A proem, declaring the poet's belief that he is narrating a true story, and answering a public taste for romance.

702: Ἔρως in 1066/8 is personified, and hence may be lightly personified here also. The meaning of the sentence is that kissing produces a desire for full consummation. One might, however, prefer the alternative spelling φιλεῖν as producing a clearer sequence: 'Love induces falling in love (cf 839), and this produces longing for what one has not, and this produces worries...'; in that case the kissing comes later.

The Romance of Akrites

Love produces kissing and kissing desire;
desire causes cares, worries and reflection
and threats and danger and separation from parents;
it fights against the sea, it recks nothing of fire;
and one in a state of desire loses his reason for love—
he thinks nothing at all of cliffs and rivers;
he thinks vigils are rest and passes plains.
And all of you who are tormented for the love of a maid
have heard in writing of those famous Hellenes;
of how many torments they too endured for the sake of desire.
Consider, readers, those heroes
the Hellenes, those wonderful and famous soldiers,
and all that came to pass for the sake of that Helen,
when they defeated all Asia
and were all made glorious by their exceeding valour—
and yet in their case too, when it came to matters of love
none could resist.
But we are not going to tell boastings and fictions and tales,
such as Homer and the rest of the Hellenes falsely told;

704: With A note I prefer καὶ ἀπειλήν to Hatzes's emendation (from G 4.11) κατατολμᾶ; E reads κατὰ πολλήν.

710–19: The Hellenes: the passage tilts at 'Homeric' interests (e.g. a version of the *Achilleid* earlier than that we possess.) (In 710 I have preferred Kyriakides' supplement to A's τῶν ‹θαυμαστῶν› Ἑλλήνων, on the lines of 714.) The claim: it is possible to write a 'Roman' love story just as compelling as the stories about the Hellenes now in vogue; Homer is a name to conjure with, especially in the twelfth century, in which this poem may have its origins.

Ταῦτα γὰρ μῦθοι οὐ λέγονται, καυχίσματα οὐ λαλοῦνται,
ἀλλ' ἀληθεύουν ἐκ παντός, μηδεὶς οὖν ἀπιστήση
ὡς λέγω τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ θαυμαστοῦ 'Ακρίτη.
Πατήρ του ἦτον ὁ ἀμιρᾶς, ὁ Μούσουρος ἐκεῖνος,
ὁποὺ ἀνατράφην εἰς Συρίαν, ἀπέσω εἰς Βαβυλῶνα,
καὶ ὡς διὰ ἀνδρείαν του τὴν πολλήν, τὴν περισσὴν τὴν φρόναν,
βουλὴν ἐποῖκαν οἱ γέροντες ἀπάσης τῆς Συρίας
καὶ τὸν σουλτάνον τὸ εἶπασιν καὶ ἀμιρὰν τὸν ἐποῖκαν.
Καὶ τρισχιλίους τὸν ἔδωσαν Τούρκους καὶ 'Αραβίτας,
καὶ ἐποίησαν τον ἐξακουστὸν εἰς πᾶσαν τὴν Συρίαν·
καὶ εἶχεν καὶ τοὺς ἀγούρους του, ἄλλους πεντακοσίους.
'Επῆρεν τους καὶ ἐξέβηκεν ἔξω εἰς Ρωμανίαν·
τὸ 'Ηρακλέως ἐκούρσευσεν, τὸ Κόνιον καὶ 'Αμόρι·
κοράσιον ἀπήρπαξεν, τοῦ 'Ακρίτη τὴν μητέραν.
Καὶ ἀπὸ τὰ κάλλη τὰ πολλά, τὰ ἐβάσταζεν ἡ κόρη,
ἐγίνετον Χριστιανὸς καὶ αὐτὴν τὴν εὐλογήθη.
Καὶ ὁ εἷς τῆς κόρης ἀδελφὸς ἦτον ὁ Κωνσταντίνος,
αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐπολέμησεν ἀμιρὰν τὸν γαμπρόν του,
τὸν θαυμαστὸν νεώτερον, τοῦ 'Ακρίτη τὸν πατέρα.
Καὶ τότε ὁ 'Ακρίτης ‹Διγενὴς› ὁ θαυμαστὸς ἐκεῖνος
μόνος του ὑπεθαύμαζεν διὰ τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας του
καὶ ἀπὸ μικρόθεν ἤρξατο δοξάζειν τὸν ἑαυτόν του.
Καὶ τότε ὡσὰν ἐγένετο δώδεκα ἐτῶν καὶ μόνον,
προσῆλθε εἰς τὸν πατέραν του, τοιαῦτα τὸν συντυχαίνει:
«Ὡς πότε θέλω κυνηγᾶν λαγούδια καὶ περδίκια;
Αὐτὰ τῶν χωριατῶν εἰσίν, τοῦ κυνηγᾶν περδίκια,
ἄρχοντες δὲ νεώτεροι καὶ εὐγενῶν παιδία

723–38: These lines rehearse the plot of the Lay of the Emir for an audience which has heard of the story but which has not *just* heard the story: they are not recapitulatory in the formulaic manner, e.g., of ARM.

723: Did the name Mousouros appear at the beginning of LE, given that it is seen as well-known here? (If so, it has dropped out of G.) And the rest of the information given here may be used to eke out the lost material.

724: With A note, I read φρόναν for MS φρόνεσιν here on metrical grounds.

for what is told here is not myth or boast
but completely true—let no-one then disbelieve
that I tell the truth about the wonderful Akrites.
His father was the Emir, that famous Mousouros,
who grew up in Syria, in Babylon;
and for his great valour and exceeding good sense
the elders of all Syria took counsel
and spoke to the Sultan and made him Emir.
And they gave him three thousand Turks and Arabians
and made him famous in all Syria;
and he also had his own lads, another five hundred.
He took them and went to the land of the Romans;
he sacked Herakleion, Konion and Amori;
he carried off a girl, the mother of Akrites.
And for the great beauty which the girl possessed
he became a Christian and married her.
(And one of the girl's brothers was Constantine:
he did battle with his brother-in-law,
the wonderful young man, the father of Akrites.)
And then Digenes Akrites, that wonderful one,
amazed all with his valiant deeds,
and from an early age began to bring glory on himself.
And when he reached the age of only twelve
he came to his father and thus addressed him:
'How long will I be hunting hares and partridges?
This is villagers' business, hunting partridges:
young lords and sons of nobles

726: A's βουλὴν ἐποίησασιν is unmetrical.

732: Was it from Amori itself that the Emir's bride was seized? The passage doesn't settle the question.

734–5: The reason for stealing her away: no religious motivation whatsoever.

744–7: Contrast the archetypal, socially backgroundless Akrites of AR, who plays at 'village staves' without thinking this below his dignity.

λέοντας καὶ ἄρκους κυνηγοῦν καὶ ἄλλα δεινὰ θηρία.
Καὶ οὐ θέλω δοξασθῆναι ἐγὼ ὡς ἀπὸ τοῦ πατρός μου,
ἀλλὰ δοξάσειν ‹θέλω› ἐγὼ πατέραν καὶ μητέραν·
νὰ δοξασθῇς, ἀφέντα μου, ἐκ τὲς ἀνδραγαθίες μου.
Δεῦτε ἂς καβαλικεύσωμεν καὶ ὑπᾶμεν εἰς κυνήγιν.»
Καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκαβαλίκευσεν ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης
καὶ ὁ πατήρ του ὁ ἀμιρὰς καὶ ὁ θεῖος του ὁ Κωνσταντῖνος,
καὶ ἐβάσταζαν γεράκια ἄσπρα ἐκ τοὺς μουτάτους.
Ἀλλὰ ὄνταν ἀπεσώσασιν εἰς τὰ ὄρη τὰ μεγάλα,
δύο ἀρκούδια ἐπήδησαν ἀπόσω ἀπὸ τὸ δάσος,
ἀρσενικὸν καὶ θηλυκόν, εἶχαν καὶ δύο κουλούκια.
Καὶ εὐθὺς τὸ ἰδεῖν τα ὁ Διγενής, τὸν θεῖον του οὕτως λέγει:
«Τί 'ναι ἐκεῖνα, ὁ θεῖος μου, ὁποὺ ἀπηδοῦν καὶ φεύγουν;»
Τοῦ λέγει: «Αὐτὰ εἶναι, Διγενή, τὰ λέγουσιν ἀρκούδια
καὶ ὅποιος τὰ πιάσῃ, Διγενή, ἔναι πολλὰ ἀνδρειωμένος.»
Καὶ ὁ Διγενὴς ὡς τὸ ἤκουσεν, πεζὸς μὲ τὸ καλίκιν . . . εἰς αὗτα κατεβαίνει
καὶ τὸ ραβδίν του ἐσήκωσεν καὶ ἐπρόλαβεν τὰ ἀρκούδια.
Τὸ θηλυκὸν εἰς πόλεμον διὰ τὰ κουλούκια ἐστάθην,
καὶ ἐκεῖνος ἦτο ἐγλήγορος καὶ ἀπάνω του ἐκατέβην·
καὶ οὐκ ἐσυνέφθασεν γοργόν, ἵνα ραβδέα τοῦ δώσῃ,
ἀλλὰ ὡσὰν τοῦ ἐσίμωσεν, κλειδώνει το εἰς τὰς χεῖρας
κ' ἔσφιξεν τοὺς βραχίονας του καὶ εὐθὺς ἀπέπνιξέν το.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τὸ ἑταίριν του, ἐστράφην ἐξοπίσω
καὶ μίλιν τοῦ ἀπεξέβηκεν φευγόμενον ἐξ αὗτον.
Καὶ ‹ὁ Διγενής›, ὁ νεώτερος, εἶχεν γοργὸν τὸ στρέμμαν,

749: I supplement θέλω for A's ἔχω.

754: Akrites' father and uncle (he has inherited valour from both sides of the family) were planning to engage in the noble but less dangerous sport of hawking rather than in the big-game hunting which follows. How far there is a shared heroic vocabulary in Romania (Christendom) is an interesting question raised by the appearance of 'moulted' ('*mudados*') at the end of verses in the *Cid* (e.g.5).

after 763: I have restored and emended a half-verse deleted by A: μὲ τὰ

hunt lions and bears and other terrible beasts.
And I do not wish to be glorious through my father,
but rather to bring glory on my father and mother,
that you may gain glory, sir, from my valiant deeds.
Come, let us ride and go hunting.'
And straightaway Digenes Akrites rode,
with his father the Emir and his uncle Constantine;
and they carried white moulted hawks.
But when they reached the high mountains,
two bears bounded out from the wood,
a male and a female, and they had two cubs.
And as soon as Digenes saw them he said to his uncle:
'Uncle, what are those things bounding and running away?'
He told him: 'Digenes, those are called bears;
and whoever catches them, Digenes, is most valiant.'
And when Digenes heard this, on foot in boots he went at them,
and raised his club and caught up with the bears.
The female stood in fight over its cubs;
but he was swift and bore down on it—
and he did not catch up with it at speed in order to give it a blow with his club;
but when he drew near, closed it in his hands
and squeezed his arms and throttled it in a trice.
And when its mate saw this it turned away
and ran a mile away in flight from him.
But young Digenes had a swift turn of foot;
for he was slim and you could see his ribs;

καλτσιά του. Cf. 1323, where the phrase indicates the heroic lack of proper equipment.

774: Akrites is skinny (cf. AR 657: ὑπόλυγνον, where this is a condescending remark by Philopappous), and this gives him his turn of speed. This is either the origin of or derived from folk songs celebrating the deeds of a small and unprepossessing youth (e.g. Academy 1962: 49).

ἦτον καὶ γὰρ ὑπόστεγνος καὶ ἐγνώθουντα οἱ νεφροί του,
καὶ εἰς τέσσαρα πηδήματα τὸν ἄρκον καταφθάνει
καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ κατωμάγουλον γοργὸν πιάνει, κρατεῖ τον
κ' εἰς δύο μέρη τὸν ἔσχισεν, στέκει καὶ θεωρεῖ τον.
Ὁ θεῖος του καὶ ὁ πατὴρ οἱ δύο ὁμάδι ὑπᾶσιν,
στέκονται καὶ θαυμάζονται τὰς πράξεις τοῦ νεωτέρου·
ὦμον πρὸς ὦμον ἔθηκαν καὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους λέγουν
«Κυρά μου, μήτηρ τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ Θεὲ πανοικτίρμων,
πράγματα βλέπομεν φρικτά 's τὸν νεώτερον ἐτοῦτον·
τοῦτον ο Θεὸς τὸν ἔστειλεν ὡς διὰ τοὺς ἀνδρειωμένους
καὶ ἐκεῖνοι νὰ τὸν τρέμουσιν τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς τους.»
Καὶ οὕτως συντυχαίνοντα ὁ θεῖος καὶ ὁ πατήρ του,
λέοντα δεινὸν εἴδασιν ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ καλάμιν·
βούβαλον ἐπεκάθετο ἀπὸ τὰ ὠτία 's στὸ οὐράδιν
καὶ ἐβύζανεν τὸ αἷμαν του, στανέου του τὸν ἐκράτει.
Καὶ ὡς τὸ εἶδε ὁ κύρης του καὶ ὁ θεῖος του ὁ Κωνσταντῖνος,
τὸν λέοντα τοῦ ἐδείξασιν, διὰ νὰ τὸν δοκιμάσουν·
γυρίζουν καὶ θεωροῦσιν τον ὅτι ἔβγαινε ἀπ' τὸ δάσος.

. . .

784: For MS καὶ οἱ ἀπελάτες ('the raiders'), an unmetrical scribal gloss which spoils the poet's conscious neoterism, the exclusion of the raiders from this romance.

after 791: This passage fills a lacuna of several leaves in the MS, which is misleadingly presented by G 4.254–372—to the extent that we may suspect that the author of G was working with a lacunose MS. There is no reason why the original poem, at this point, shouldn't have jumped on six years as LE 225 jumped on nine months. The story that unfolds is clear enough: Akrites's trip was for hunting (807), and he had not (*pace* G) plotted with his father to steal away the daughter. To keep the proportions of the story, among other things, it may be that the general's confinement of his daughter is just a familiar narrative motif which required little enough explanation. Conceivably (Huxley 1974), we have here, as

and with four bounds he overtook the bear
and swiftly seized it by the lower jaw and held it,
and tore it in two and stood and looked at it.
His uncle and father went together,
and stood and marvelled at the youth's deeds.
They put shoulder to shoulder and said to one another:
'Lady, Mother of God, and most merciful God,
we see in this youth fearsome things.
He has been sent by God for the valiant,
and may they tremble at him all the years of their lives.'
And thus were his uncle and father conversing
when they saw a terrible lion in a reed-bed:
it was sitting on a buffalo from ear to tail
and was sucking its blood, holding it down by force.
And when his father and uncle Constantine saw it
they showed him the lion, to test him—
they turned and saw it coming out of the wood.

And Akrites seized his sword and went off against the lion; it leapt out at him and he split its head in two. His father and uncle rejoiced at his valour, and declared that the boy had now come of age and was fit to hunt on his own.
So time passed. One day out hunting Akrites came across a castle in which lived a general lived who was reputed to have a beautiful daughter—but he refused to marry her off. Akrites serenaded her at her window; she looked out to see him, and they fell in love at first sight. They resolved to meet the following night; and the maid gave her ring to Akrites, urging him not to forget her. And as he rode home he prayed: 'Lord God, hear my prayer; and set me the sun and rise me the moon

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in certain Cypriot folk songs in which Digenes is a half-breed (e.g. Academy 1962: 10–16), a vestige of social tensions between generals (the old class) and *akritai* on the Byzantine borders.

«ὡς διὰ νὰ τὸ ἔχω συνοδείαν 'ς τὴν στράταν ὁποὺ ὑπηένω,
ὅτι καὶ μοναχός εἶμαι καὶ μόνος θέλω ὁδεύειν.»
'Σ τὰ γονικά του ἀπέσωσεν ἀφρόντιστος καὶ σῶος,
καὶ ἀνέσια ἐσύντυχεν τὸν πρωτοστράτορά του:
«Στράτορα, πρωτοστράτορα καὶ πρῶτε τῶν στρατόρων,
ἀπόστρωσε τὸν γρίβαν μου καὶ στρῶσε μου τὸν μαῦρον,
τὸν εἶχεν πάντα ὁ θεῖος μου εἰς τὰς ἀνδραγαθίας του.
Τρεῖς ἴγκλες μοῦ τὸν ἴγκλωσε καὶ τρεῖς ὀμπροστελίνες
καὶ τὸν βαρὺν χαλίναρον, διὰ νὰ γοργογυρίζῃ,
καὶ κρέμασε εἰς τὴν σέλαν μου καὶ τὸ βαρὺν σπαθί μου,
ὅτι εἰς ἀνάγκην φοβερὰν καὶ εἰς ἁρπαγὴν ὑπάγω.»
Τὸν λόγον οὐκ ἐπλήρωσεν οὐδὲ τὴν συντυχίαν,
καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκατεπήδησεν, 'ς τὴν σκάλαν ἀναβαίνει.
Καὶ ἐξέβην ἡ μητέρα του κρατεῖ, καταφιλεῖ τον:
«Καλῶς ἦρθες, τὸ τέκνον μου, ἂν μοῦ ἤφερες κυνήγιν.»
Καὶ τότε πάλε ὁ Διγενὴς οὕτως ἀπιλογᾶται:
«Νὰ ἔλθουν τὰ κυνήγια μου καὶ τότε νὰ τὰ ἴδῃς.»
Καὶ τότε ἡ μητέρα του ἤρξατο εὔχεσθαίν του:
«Δέσποινά μου πανύμνητε, κυρὰ εὐλογημένη,
δοξάζω, μεγαλύνω σε καὶ υἱὸν τὸν Θεόν σου,
ὅτι ἔδωκές με νεώτερον τὸν ὁ κόσμος οὐκ ἔχει
καὶ χάρισέ μου τον νὰ ζῇ εἰς χρόνους ἀμετρήτους,
νὰ τὸν θωρῶ, νὰ χαίρωμαι τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς μου.»

794: An unequivocal indication that in the lost part of E Akrites had set off on his own.

798: The words γρίβαν and μαῦρον seem to have been transposed in the MS, which I therefore emend with A note; MG folk song has an old grey to be better than any number of young black horses. It may be, however, that the verse is no more logical than the ballad verses in English: 'oh saddle me the black, the black / oh saddle me the brown.'

799: The motif of family valour, as at LE 278; it is in this way only that Constantine, though a proverbial figure (736) remains part of the well-organized story here.

that I may have it for company on the journey that I go—
for I am on my own and alone will I travel.'
He arrived at his parents' house safe and sound,
and in a low voice addressed his master of horse:
'Master of horse, first master of horse, and first among masters of horse,
unsaddle my grey and saddle me the black,
which my uncle had always for his valiant deeds.
Tie the saddle with three straps underneath and three in front
and the heavy bit, so that the horse will turn quickly;
and hang on my saddle my heavy sword—
for I am going into a tight spot and to carry out an abduction.'
He did not add to these words and conversation,
but at once leapt down from his horse and went upstairs.
And his mother came out and held and kissed him tenderly:
'Welcome, child, if you have brought me game.'
And then Digenes thus replied:
'My game will arrive, and then you will see it.'
And then his mother began to bless him:
'Hymned Mistress, blessed Lady,
I glorify and magnify Thee and Thy Son, God,
for that thou hast given unto me a youth such as there is not his like in all the world.
But grant him to live years without number,
that I may behold him, that I may be glad all the years of my life.'

803: The phrase requires no explanation: this sort of thing is simply part of the life of action; but the ἁρπαγή here differs from that of AR 668 by being that of a consenting woman. Akrites' joke in 809 shows that something of the old sporting attitude remains (Ricks 1989b).

810–23: At the point at which Akrites will acquire a bride, the mother unwittingly marks the rite of passage with this pair of speeches, designed more for point than for psychological realism. Just as the father and uncle have incited Akrites to brave deeds (790), so it is the mother's role to hold him back, with 821 echoing 794: she would have plenty of φροντίδες if she knew what he was up to. (A similar contrast is to be found with the opposing pair, the general and his wife

Καὶ εὐθὺς κρατεῖ, καταφιλεῖ τὰ ὀμμάτια τοῦ νεωτέρου
καὶ ἐσήκωσεν τὰς χεῖρας της 'ς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀπάνω:
«Δέσποινά μου πανύμνητε, κυρά μου εὐλογημένη,
τὸν νεώτερον τὸν μὲ ἔδωκες τὸν θαυμαστὸν 'Ακρίτην,
δός τον μακροημέρευσιν τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς του, 820
νὰ περπατῇ ἀφρόντιστος, νὰ χαίρεται τὸν κόσμον,
τὸν βίον του ἀδιάλειπτον τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς του,
νὰ τὸν φοβοῦνται πάντοτε ἔθνη τῆς οἰκουμένης.»
Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος γοργὸν ἐξυπολύθη,
ἔβγαλεν τὰ καλίτσια του καὶ ἐκάτσεν εἰς τὸ δεῖπνον.
Καὶ ἀφότου ἀποδείπνησεν, ἐμπαίνει εἰς τὸ κουβούκλιν
καὶ ἐπῆρεν τὸ θαμπούριν του καὶ ἀποκατάστησέν το.
῎Οφιων δερμάτια ἔσχισεν, 828
<προβάτων ἔκλωσε ἔντερα> καὶ ἐποίησεν του τὰς κόρδας
<καὶ ἐποίησεν> καὶ τὰ δόντια των πανέμνοστα τριπάρια.
Γοργὸν καθυποδέθηκεν, 'ς τὸν στάβλον κατεβαίνει, 830
πηδᾷ καὶ ἐκαβαλίκευσεν καὶ ἐπῆρεν τὸ σπαθίν του·
καὶ ἔκρουεν τὸ λαβοῦτον του καὶ ἀηδόνει καὶ ἐτραγούδει, 833
ἀηδονικὰ ἐτραγούδησεν καὶ χαμηλὰ τὸ κρούει.
Καὶ ἐκίνησεν τὴν στράταν του καὶ ὑπάγει εἰς τὸ κοράσιον· 835
σφικτὰ τὰς κόρδας ἔδησεν καὶ ἐλάλησεν μεγάλως 837
καὶ ἐκεῖνος χαμηλότερα καὶ ἐβγαίνει τῆς φωνῆς του:
«Εἴτις ἐφίλησεν μακράν, γοργὸν οὐκ ὑπαγαίνει·
τὰς νύκτας οὐ περιπατεῖ, τὸν ὕπνον οὐ στερεῖται, 840
οὐ θέλει τὸν Παράδεισον μὲ τὰ μυρίσματά του·

Καὶ ὅταν ἀπεσώθηκεν 'ς τοῦ στρατηγοῦ τοὺς οἴκους,

(1015ff).) Partly because it changes this protective tone, partly because it has a purview beyond this poem, and primarily because its destroys the parallelism of the two speeches, one might question the place of 823, which looks like the sort of casual scribal exaggeration of the deeds of Akrites (with Alexander the model) familiar from E.

830: Γοργὸν καθυποδέθηκεν echoing 824 γοργὸν ἐξυπολύθη in order to show how quickly he gets on with the job.

833: ἀηδόνει from δονῶ with a pun on ἀηδόνι/ἀηδονικά.

And at once she held the youth and kissed his eyes,
and raised her arms to the heavens above:
'Hymned Mistress, blessed Lady,
the youth that thou hast given unto me, the wonderful Akrites,
820 grant him length of days in the years of his life,
to roam free of care, to rejoice in the world
for his uninterrupted span, the years of his life,
and may the nations of the earth fear him always.'
And then the youth quickly took off his shoes,
825 took off his boots and sat down to supper.
And when he finished his supper he went into his chamber
and took his tabor and strung it.
828 He tore snake-skins,
wound sheep-gut and made the strings,
and made the sheep's teeth into delightful pegs.
830 Quickly he put his shoes on, went to the stable,
mounted and rode and took his sword,
833 and strummed his lute—and it rang and he sang,
sang like a nightingale, and softly he strummed it.
835 He set off on his way and went to the maid;
837 he tightened the strings and it rang out with a great sound;
and he himself sang more softly, under his breath:
'If one has a faraway love, he does not go off at speed;
840 he does not roam at night; he does not lose his sleep;
he does not want Paradise with its scents.

836 But when he reached the general's house

834: He plays softly when leaving the house, so as not to attract attention.

836: The scribe, with 845 in mind, has jumped the gun with the inclusion of this verse (other examples in A: LE 27, RA 832), breaking the sense in the narration: Akrites plays his lute loudly when he is in the wild.

839: Εἴτις ἐφίλησεν μακράν. One may detect in this phrase the catch- phrase invented by Jaufré de Rudel, *amor de loing* (song 5), where it appears 14 times in 52 verses (Pickens 1978). Jaufré was a vassal of Eleanor of Aquitaine, with whom the revival of the Greek romance at this period is connected by E. Jeffreys 1983.

ἐγὼ μακρὰν ἐφίλησα, ἀλλὰ γοργὸν ὑπάγω
καὶ ἐγὼ ὡς διὰ τὴν πανεύνοστην ὕπνον οὐδὲν κοιμοῦμαι.»
Ἦτον δάος ὁ μαῦρος του, τὸ φέγγος ὡς ἡμέρα,
καὶ ὡς δι' αὖτον ἀπεσώθηκεν 'ς τοῦ στρατηγοῦ τοὺς οἴκους.
Καὶ ὅταν ἀπέσωσεν ἐκεῖ, τὴν κόρην οὕτως λέγει:
«Σύ, κόρη, ἀπεμερίμνησες καὶ ἀμέριμνα κοιμᾶσαι
καὶ ἐβγαίνεις ἐκ τὸν ὅρκον σου, πανθαύμαστον κοράσιον.
Πιστεύω, ἀπολησμόνησες τὰ χθεσινά σου λόγια,
καλή, τὰ ἐσυντυχαίναμεν οἱ δύο μοναχοί μας,
καὶ ὅρκους τοὺς ἐμόσαμεν, νὰ μὴ ἀποχωριστοῦμεν.»
Καὶ ἐκείνη τὸν ἐγνώρισεν ἀπὸ τοῦ τραγουδίου·
ἐφύρθη καὶ ἐσηκώθηκεν καὶ ἐπῆρε τὸ λουρίν της,
γοργὸν ἐκατεπήδησεν καὶ ἐβγαίνει εἰς τὴν θυρίδαν
καὶ τότε τὸ κοράσιον τὸν νέον κατονειδίζει:
«Ἐγώ, κύρκα, ὀνειδίζω σε, διατὶ ἐπαραβραδιάστης
καὶ ὡς ὀκνηρὸν καὶ ράθυμον πάντα νὰ σὲ ὀνειδίζω.
Καὶ τὸ λαβοῦτο σου, τὸ κρούεις, ἔβλεπε ποῦ τὸ κρούεις·
δὲν ἠξεύρεις, ὀμμάτια μου, τὸ φῶς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν μου,
ὅτι ἂν γροικήσῃ ὁ κύρης μου καὶ ὅλη μου ἡ γενέα,
νὰ στερηθῇς τὴν νεότην σου τὴν ὥραιαν ὡς διὰ ἐμέναν;
Ὅτι πολλοὶ ἐδοκίμασαν ἀγνώστως νὰ μὲ πάρουν
καὶ ἐγροίκησεν ὁ κύρης μου καὶ ἐκακοδοίκησέν τους·
οὕτως καὶ ἐσὺ τὴν νεότη σου ἔβλεπε τὴν ὡραίαν.
Καὶ ἐγὼ ἠξεύρω, ὀμμάτια μου, τὸ φῶς τῶν ὀμματίων μου,
πόθος σὲ ἐκατεπόνεσεν, ἡ ἀγάπη ἐφλόγισέν σε,
τὸν νοῦν σου ἐπαρεσάλευσεν, τὸν λογισμόν σου ἐπῆρεν

844: Supplied by A from G 4.407.

845: The hero simply arrives at his destination, even if he has travelled far (839); only the return journey is of interest (cf. LE 208).

847: This verse and those that follow fills in the essential missing plot; it also puns on the μέριμνες which the poet has warned us to expect of love in the proem (703).

855ff: The girl has no name, perhaps, (later tradition produced the name Eudocia

I have a faraway love—but I go off at speed,
and I for my delightful one sleep not at all.'
His black horse was fleet, the moon shone like day;
and so he reached the general's house.
And when he arrived there, he spoke thus to the maid:
'Maid, you have forgotten your cares and sleep careless,
and you abandon your oath, wonderful maid.
I believe that you have forgotten your words of yesterday,
loved one, that we two spoke alone together,
swearing oaths that we should never be parted.'
And she recognized him from his song;
and she was dismayed; and she rose and took her girdle
and quickly jumped down and came to the window.
And then the maid fiercely reproached the youth:
'It is I, young sir, who reproach you for coming at a late hour;
and I will always reproach you as idle and lazy.
And as for the lute that you strum, watch where you strum it—
do you not know, my eyes, light of my eyes,
that if my father hear it, and all my family,
then you will be bereft of your handsome youth on my account?
For many have tried to carry me off covertly,
and my father has heard of it and made sorry work of them—
so you too now be careful for your handsome youth.
And I know, my eyes, light of my eyes,
that desire has pained you, that love has inflamed you;
upset your mind, taken your wits;

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so that she need not go without) but certainly a will and a character.

862–3: This may have been the sole reference to the previous courtiers on which G dwells; there would be a certain neatness to its being brought in by the girl as an additional argument for cold feet about which she had hitherto kept quiet.

865: This verse and 859 might once have been the same, but there is little reason to prefer one to the other.

867: Cf. 706 λογίζεται.

καὶ εἰς θάνατον σὲ ἔριψεν ὡς δι' ἐμὲ ν' ἀποθάνῃς
καὶ θεωρῶ σε μοναχὸν καὶ οὐκ ἔχω τί ποιήσει.
Αὐθέντα, ἂν παρακατεβῶ καὶ ἐπάρῃς με μεδ' ἔσου
καὶ φθάσουν σε τ' ἀδέλφια μου καὶ τὸ συγγενικόν μου,
ἐσέναν νὰ σκοτώσουσιν καὶ ἐμέναν νὰ διαγείρουν,
νὰ στερηθῇς τὴν νεότην σου τὴν ὥραιαν ὡς δι' ἐμέναν.»
Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος οὕτως ἀπιλογᾶται:
«Καλὰ λέγεις, κοράσιον; Οὕτως μοῦ συντυχαίνεις;
Ἐγὼ μόνος καὶ μοναχὸς φουσάτα πολεμίζω
καὶ μοναχός μου δύναμαι ὅλα νὰ τὰ νικήσω
καὶ κάστρα νὰ ἀντιμαχιστῶ, θηρία νὰ φονεύσω,
καὶ ἐσὺ ἀδελφούς σου μοῦ λαλεῖς, πατέραν καὶ γενέαν;
Κουροῦνες πόσες ἠμποροῦν ἀετοῦ βρῶμα νὰ πάρουν;
Καλή μου, ἂν ἐμετάγνωσες καὶ ἔχεις ἀλλοῦ τὸν πόθον,
εἰπέ μου τὴν ἀλήθειαν, κυρά, νὰ ὑπαγαίνω.
Εἰδὲ ἂν θέλῃς ὁλόψυχα, καλή, ὅτι νὰ φιλοῦμε,
ὥς ὅτι ἔν' τὸ κατάψυχον, μικρὸν μὴ ἀναπαγοῦμεν,
μὴ καρτερεύσωμεν ἐδῶ καὶ καύσῃ μας τὸ κάμα
καὶ στέκω καὶ φλογίζῃ μας ἡ καῦσις τοῦ ἡλίου
καὶ καύσῃ καὶ μαράνῃ μας τούτην τὴν στράταν ὅλην.
Καὶ ἔλα γοργόν, κοράσιον, μὴ μᾶς νοήσῃ ὁ κόσμος.
Καὶ μὴ δοκῇς, βεργόλικε, ἡ πάντερπνος ἡ κόρη,
ὡς διὰ φόβον τοῦ λαοῦ λέγω σου νὰ ὑπᾶμεν·
μά τὸν Ἅγιον μου Θεόδωρον, τὸν μέγαν ἀπελάτην.

ὅτι μηδὲ μᾶς νοήσουσιν καὶ ἀποκλείσουν μας ὧδε,

871: Brothers (five of them, 969) echoing LE.

876ff: Taken to the letter, this might strictly imply many earlier deeds of valour; but it's just as likely to be, in part (e.g. κάστρα) premature boasting that comes off (so ARM and, it seems, AR); we have a contrast, then, between Akrites' mother's view of him as just a promising little hunter and the real exploits to which he is about to graduate.

880: A vivid, evidently proverbial, expression looking forward to the humiliation of the general and his family.

883–95: According to A, the speech is a justification by the hero of anxiety which he feels; but it is simply practical; and Akrites repudiates the allegation of

and thrown you to death, that you would die for me—
and I see you all alone and can do nothing.
Master, if I come down and you take me with you.
and my brothers catch up with you, and my kin,
they will kill you and take me back:
you will be bereft of your handsome youth on my account.'
And the youth thus replied:
'Is this right what you say, maid? Is this how you talk to me?
I alone and all alone do battle with armies,
and all alone defeat all of them—
and besiege castles, and slay wild beasts—
and you speak to me of your brothers, father and family?
How many crows can take an eagle's food from him?
Loved one, if you have changed your mind and your desire is elsewhere,
tell me the truth, lady, that I may be on my way.
But if, loved one, you wish with all your heart for us to love,
while it is still cool, let us not rest at all.
Let us not wait here for the heat of the sun to burn us,
and the heat of the sun inflame us as I wait here,
and burn and wither us all the journey.
No, come quickly, maid, lest others spy us.
And do not think, lissom, delightful maid,
that it is for fear of the throng that I say we should go—
no, by my St Theodore, the great raider!

892 it is lest they spy us and cut us off here

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cowardice. Furthermore, heat and withering are popularly perceived as the states of unfulfilled love; and there is a suggestion that waiting in the heat will be unfavourable to love-making, hence the rather laboured reiterations of 883–5; contrast 1025–26. The pun on δλόψυχα and κατάψυχον makes the drift of the passage clear. (I omit 892, an unmetrical addition by a scribe who failed to understand the passage and wanted to explain what might have looked like cowardice.)

891: The poet cleverly includes one ἀπελάτης in this way, even if all the others have been excluded from this story.

'Αμὴ εἰς τὸν κάμπο, λέγω σοι, ὅσοι θέλουν ἂς ἔρθουν
καὶ νὰ ἴδης κύρκαν τὸν φιλεῖς καὶ πλέον νὰ μὲ ἀγαπήσης
καὶ τότε νὰ ἰδῆς ἄγουρον, τὸν ὁ κόσμος οὐκ ἔχει.»
Καὶ τότε τὸ κοράσιον τὸν νεώτερον ἐλάλει:
«'Εδὰ διὰ σέν, αὐθέντη μου, ἀρνοῦμαι τοὺς γονεῖς μου
καὶ τὰ καλά μου ἀδέλφια καὶ τὸν πολύν μου πλοῦτον
καὶ ἐσέναν ἐξακολουθῶ διὰ τὸν πολύν σου πόθον
καὶ εὕρη σε ὁ Θεός, αὐθέντη μου, ἂν μὲ παραπονέσης.»
Καὶ ἐδάκρυσεν ὁ νεώτερος καὶ μὲ ὅρκον τὴν ὀμνέει:
«Κύριε Θεὲ φιλάνθρωπε, ὁ κτίσας τοὺς αἰῶνας,
ἐὰν ἐγὼ ἐνθυμηθῶ νὰ σὲ παραπονέσω,
οὐ μὴ χαρῶ τὴν νεότην μου, τὴν περισσήν μου ἀνδρείαν
καὶ οὐ μὴ ταφῶ ὡς Χριστιανὸς καὶ οὐ μὴ κατευοδοῦμαι,
νὰ μηδὲ τῆς μητέρας μου εὐχὴν κληρονομήσω
καὶ οὐ μὴ χαρῶ τὴν περισσὴν ἀγάπην ἐδική σου,
ἐὰν ποτὲ ἐνθυμηθῶ νὰ σὲ παραπονέσω·
ἀμὲ καὶ ἐσύ, ἱλαρόμματε, βλέπε τὸ ἀσκάνδαλόν σου.
Καὶ ἐγείρου, τὸ κοράσιον, ἔλα ἂς περιπατοῦμεν.»
Καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκατεπήδησεν τὴν χαμηλὴν θυρίδαν,
εἰς αὗτον δὲ ἐπήδησεν καὶ ἐκρέμασεν εἰς αὗτον.
'Εκεῖνος τὴν ἐδέξατο ὀμπρός 's τὸ μπροστοκούρβιν·
στρεφνά, γλυκιὰ ἐφιλήσασιν ὡς καὶ τὸ δίκαιον εἶχαν,
καὶ ἐπίασαν τὴν στράταν τους, χαιράμενοι ὑπαγαίνουν.
Καὶ ἐστράφην ὁ νεώτερος, φωνὴν μεγάλην σύρνει:
«Εὔχου με, κύρη στρατηγέ, μετὰ τῆς θυγατρός σου.»
Καὶ ἐκεῖνος ὡς τὸ ἤκουσεν καὶ τὸν ἠχὸν τοῦ μαύρου,

θηρία νὰ μὲ διαμοιραστοῦν

893: The plain not so much because as it is safer as because it is the place for all fair and civilized fighting (LE 32).

894: I delete MS τότε before νὰ for the metre.

897: Picking up 704 χωρισμὸν γονέων.

900: For the threat cf. LE 478–9.

902–10: This speech is a rather lengthy response to the girl's speech, and may originally have been shorter: 902 entails a change of subject and seems to have been put in as a necessary component of any oath; there is no trace of 904 in G.

No indeed, let all who will come to the field,
and you will see a young sir to love and will love me the more;
and you will see a lad such as there is not his like in all the world.'
And then the maid said to the youth:
'For you, master, here and now I renounce my parents
and my fine brothers and my great wealth,
and I follow you out of my great desire for you—
and may God find you out, master, if you do me hurt.'
And the youth wept and swore her an oath:
'By Lord God kind to men, builder of the ages,
if ever I think to do you hurt,
may I not rejoice in my youth and my exceeding valour;
and may I not receive Christian burial and not prosper,
and may I not inherit my mother's blessing;
and may I not rejoice in your exceeding love,
if ever I think to do you hurt.
But as for you, bright-eyed maid, see that there be no stumbling-block for you.
But up, maid; come, let us be on our way.'
And straightaway she leapt down from the low window,
leapt down to him and clung to him.
He put her in front of the saddle:
tightly, sweetly they kissed, as was fitting,
and they took off on the journey and went in gladness.
And the youth turned round and raised a great shout:
'Give me your blessing, sir general—and your daughter too!'
And when he heard this and the sound of the horse,

904 may wild beasts tear me apart

We might hazard that the original oath balanced the loved one's and consisted just of 903/5/7/8.

915: A rare authorial judgement.

917: Something of a surprise: it looked as if the happy ending was in sight; but honour does not permit this (959).

919: Μαῦρος can just be any horse in MG folk song; the verse does not necessarily have a bearing on 798.

φωνὴν μεγάλην ἔσυρεν: «'Εχάσα τὸ παιδίν μου!
'Αγοῦροι ἀπὸ τοῦ Λύκαντος, ἀγοῦροι ἀπὸ τὴν βίγλαν,
βοηθεῖτε εἰς τὸν παγκόπελον, ἐπῆρεν τὸ παιδίν μου!»
Καὶ ὅσ' ἄστρα ἔν' 'ς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ φύλλα ἔν' εἰς τὰ δένδρα,
καὶ ὅσα πουλίτσια πίνουσιν εἰς τὴν 'Ικέαν τὴν λίμνην,
οὕτως ἐκαταπέτουντα οἱ σέλες εἰς τοὺς μαύρους.
Καὶ ὅσοι τὸν ἐγνωρίζασιν ἔστρωναν καὶ ἀποστρῶναν
καὶ ὅσοι οὐδὲν τὸν ἐγνώριζαν πηδοῦν, καβαλικεύουν.
Σουδάλης ὁ Σαρακηνὸς ἀπὸ τὴν πέραν βίγλαν
ὀκτὼ τέντας ἐπήδησεν καὶ δεκαοκτὼ κουρτίνες,
φαρία τεσσαράκοντα νὰ κάτσῃ εἰς τὸ ἐδικόν του·
ἐβάστα καὶ εἰς τὴν χέραν του ραβδὶν κασιδολίτσιν.
"Ολον τὸ βλέμμαν καὶ τὸν νοῦν ἔριψεν εἰς 'Ακρίτην
καὶ ἐπτέρνισεν τὸν μαῦρον του, ἀπάνου του ὑπαγαίνει.
Καὶ εὐθὺς τὸ ἰδεῖν ὁ Διγενής, τὴν κόρην συντυχαίνει:
«Βλέπεις, καλή, Σαρακηνὸν πῶς μᾶς καταδιώκει;
"Αρτι, κυρά μου, πρόσεξε τὸ τί τὸν θέλω ποίσει.»
Καὶ ἐπέζευσε τὴν λυγερήν, κάτω τὴν ἀποθέτει
καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκαβαλίκευσεν, εἰς αὖτον κατεβαίνει
καὶ ἐπῆρεν τὸ κοντάριν του καὶ προσυπήντησέν του
καὶ πρῶτον τὸν ἐλάλησεν: «Σαρακηνέ, μὲ δέχου.»
Καὶ κονταρέαν τὸν ἔδωκεν ὀμπρός 'ς τὸ μπροστοκούρβιν
καὶ εὐθὺς τὸν ἐθανάτωσεν αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ φαρίν του.
Καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκατεπήδησεν καὶ ἐπῆρεν τὸ κοράσιον.
Γοργὸν ἐκαβαλίκευσαν ἄλλοι τριακόσιοι ἀγοῦροι,

920: A rare speech of more than half a verse which begins with the second half of a verse (see also LE 487): this conveys the general's consternation.

921: This suggests that Lykandos was the general's home; but like a number of names in the E poems, it's stuck in tradition rather than expatiated on.

922: This need not suggest that any overtures had been made and rejected: *whoever* has taken her must be a παγκόπελος.

923–5: A fine simile, conveying not just the multitude but the movement in flight of the saddles; a conscious expansion of a simpler version found in ARM 77–8. It has, moreover, a geographical element that presumably added a detail of more than random interest.

he raised a great shout: 'I have lost my child!
Lads of Lykandos, lads of the guard,
help me get the bastard of bastards—he has taken my child!'
And as many as the stars in the sky and the leaves on the trees;
and as many as the birds that drink at the lake of Ikea,
so many were the saddles that flew onto the black horses.
And all those who knew him saddled and unsaddled;
and all those who did not know him mounted and rode.
Soudales the Saracen from the far post
leapt over eight tents and eighteen pavilions
and forty horses to sit on his own horse;
and he held in his hand a club with a metal tip.
He cast his sight and mind full on Akrites,
and spurred on his horse and bore down on him.
And as soon as Digenes saw this, he said to the maid:
'Do you see, loved one, how a Saracen pursues us?
Come, my lady, watch what I shall do to him.'
And he dismounted the lissom maid and set her down;
and rode and bore down on him,
and took his lance and met him,
and said first to him, 'Saracen, take me on.'
And he gave him a blow with his lance in front, at the pommel,
and straightaway killed him and his steed.
And straightaway he leapt down and took the maid.
Swiftly riding were another three hundred lads,

927: If pressed, this gives confirmation that we are beyond the time of Akrites' first hunt: his deeds are known; but, given that the romance is the centre of this poem, the early prowess was probably indicated synoptically (as it probably was in the introduction to EA, to which the remark of the raiders at 1216 relates).

928: As often (e.g. LE 337), a Saracen is named; the general, in a border area, would certainly have had some in his service.

941: The Saracen is killed by a blow to his μπροστοκούρβιν just as Akrites has carried off his bride on his (914).

944: The battle follows a sequence: the chief Saracen; the 300-strong guard; the five brothers.

οἱ μὲν σουσανιασμένοι ἦσαν, ἄλλοι λουρικιασμένοι,
εἶχεν καὶ καβαλάριους ἀπέσω ἀπὲ τὸ Ἡράκλιν·
φωνιάζουν καὶ ἀνταρεύγονται καὶ ταραχὰς σηκώνουν
καὶ ἐκεῖ τὸν ἐκατέφθασαν εἰς τόπον λιβαδῆσον.
Καὶ ἐστράφη ὁ νεώτερος, τὴν κόρην οὕτως λέγει:
«Βλέπεις, κοράσιον μου καλόν, τὸ τί λαὸς μᾶς διώκει;»
Ὡς τὸ ἤκουσεν, ἐφάνη της διὰ φόβον τῆς τὸ λέγει
καὶ κλαίουσα τὸν ἔλεγεν ἐκ στεναγμοῦ καρδίας:
«Ἄφις με, ἀφέντη μου καλέ, ἄφις με ἂς ἀποθάνω·
μόνη μου ἐποῖκα τὸ κακόν, μόνη μου ἂς ἀπολάβω·
καὶ ἐσὺ μαῦρον καλόν ἔχεις καὶ σῶσε τὸν ἑαυτόν σου.»
Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος τοιαῦτα τὴν ἐλάλει:
«Καλὰ λέγεις, κοράσιον μου, γλυκέα μου συνοδεία;
Ἐγὼ εἶπα το νὰ τοὺς ἰδῇς τὸ τί λαὸς μᾶς διώκει,
μὴ μὲ ὀνειδίζης αὔριον ὅτι κλεψίαν σ' ἐπῆρα,
καὶ νὰ ἰδῇς κύρκαν τὸν φιλεῖς καὶ πλέον νὰ μὲ ἀγαπήσης.»
Καὶ ἐπῆρεν την κ' ἐκάτσε την ἀπάνω εἰς τὸ λιθάριν·
τὸ ρέτενον ἐγύρισεν καὶ εἰς αὔτους κατεβαίνει
κ' ἕνα ἐξ αὐτοὺς ἐχώρισεν καὶ ἐδῶκεν του σπαθέαν
καὶ μέσα τὸν ἐχώρισεν αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ φαρίν του.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδαν οἱ ἀπομένοντες ἐστράφησαν ὀπίσω
καὶ ὁ νεώτερος ὁμοίαζεν ἄσπρον καλὸν γεράκιν,
ὅταν ζυγώνῃ πέρδικα καὶ ἔμπῃ ἀπέσω εἰς δάσος·
οὕτως τοὺς ἐπεσκόρπισεν ὁ νεώτερος ἐκείνους.
Πέντε ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐχώρισαν καὶ ἦσαν οἱ ἀδελφοί της
καὶ ἐπιλαλῆσαν τὰ φαρία καὶ ὑπᾶν εἰς τὸ κοράσιον
καὶ ὁ νέος τοὺς ἔβαλε εἰς τὸν νοῦν μὴ ἀρπάξουσι τὴν κόρην,
πλησίον τους ἐπήδησεν καὶ ἐπισταπόδησέν τους

946: The distance is unrealistically far (unless these were troops which *originated* in Herakleion); but the name, trailing clouds of atmosphere, is remembered.
954: A despairing echo by the girl of her lover's confidence (793).
959: That is, secretly, dishonourably—hence the bravado of 918.
960: Repeats 894: the hero is about to confirm it by action.

some in chain-mail, others with breastplates;
and they also had cavalry from Herakleion.
They shouted and made a storm and raised a tumult,
and caught up with him there in a place of pasture.
And the youth turned and said to the maid:
'Good maid, do you see what a throng pursues us?'
When she heard this, she thought he was saying it in fear,
and weeping she said to him with a sigh from the heart:
'Leave me, good master, leave me to my death—
it was I alone who did wrong: let me pay the price alone.
You have a good black horse—save yourself.'
And the youth spoke to her thus:
'Is this right what you say, my maid, my sweet companion?
I told you for you to see what a throng pursues us,
lest you reproach me tomorrow that I took you away covertly;
and that you may see a young sir to love, and love me the more.'
And he took her and sat her down on a rock;
he turned the reins and bore down on them
and picked out one of them and gave him a blow with his sword
and clove him and his steed in two.
And when the others saw they drew back;
and the youth was like a fine white hawk
when it presses hard on a partridge and goes into a wood:
even so did the youth scatter them.
Five of them split off, and they were her brothers,
and they urged on their horses and went towards the maid;
but the young man was careful that they not snatch the maid:
he bounded at them and turned them back,

964: The deed of 777 now when it is needed; compare *Cid* 2424.

966–8: An accurately observed picture of a hawk; the hero behaves himself like that bird whose use he'd originally rejected in favour of more dangerous activities.

καὶ ἐκεῖνοι πάλι ἐστράφησαν καὶ ὑπᾶν εἰς τὸ κοράσιον.
‹Καὶ τότε πάλι ὁ Διγενὴς› τὸ ἰδεῖν τοὺς νεωτέρους, 973a
γοργὸν ἐπῆρεν τὸ ραβδὶν καὶ προσυπήντησέν τους·
ἕναν χωρίζει ἐξ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐδῶκεν του ραβδέαν·
τὸ ἰδεῖν οἱ ἀπομένοντες, ἐκεῖ τὸν προσκυνοῦσιν.
Καὶ ὁ κύρης τους ὁ στρατηγὸς ἐκεῖ ἀπέσωσέν τους
κλαίων καὶ ὀδυρόμενος· ‹οὐκ ἠμπορεῖ ὑπομένειν.›
Τὸ νὰ τὸν ἴδη ὁ Διγενής, ‹σταυρὸν› δένει τὰ χέρια
καὶ χαμηλὰ ἐπροσκύνα τον κύρην καὶ πενθερόν του
καὶ μετὰ τὸ προσκύνημαν ἄκο τὰ τί τοῦ λέγει:
«Εὔχου μου, κύρη στρατηγέ, μετὰ τῆς θυγατρός σου
καὶ βλέπε μηδὲν λυπηθῇς, καλὸν γαμπρὸν ἐπῆρες·
τὸν κόσμον καὶ ἂν ἐγύρευες, κάλλιον οὐκ εἶχες εὕρειν.
Καὶ ἂν θέλης, κύρη στρατηγέ, δουλείαν νὰ σὲ ποιήσω·
καὶ τότε, ἀφέντη μου, νὰ ἰδῇς τὸ τί γαμπρὸν ἐπῆρες.»
Καὶ τότε καὶ ὁ στρατηγὸς τοιοῦτον λόγον λέγει:
«Εὐχαριστῶ σε, Θεὲ καλέ, τὴν ἄφραστον προνοίαν
καὶ τὴν φιλανθρωπίαν σου τὴν εἰς ἐμὲν δειχθεῖσαν,
ὅτι ἔπηρα γαμπρὸν καλόν, τὸν ὁ κόσμος οὐκ ἔχει.
Στράφου, καλὲ νεώτερε, εἰς τὰ πενθερικά σου,
νὰ ἐπάρης καὶ τὴν προίκαν σου, τριακόσια κιντηνάρια,
ὅτι καὶ χωρισμένα εἶν' ἀπὸ τοὺς ἀδελφούς της·
πάλιν δὲ διὰ τὰ κάλλη της, τὰ βλέπομεν εἰς αὔτην,
δίδω σου τὸ λογάρι μου, τρεῖς λίτρες κιντηνάρια
καὶ ἐγκόλφια ὁλόχρυσα, τὰ ἔχει ἐκ τῆς μητρός της,
καὶ νὰ σὲ ἰδῇ ἡ στρατήγισσα καὶ νὰ χαρῇ ἡ ψυχή της
καὶ νὰ σᾶς εὐλογήσωμεν καὶ τότε νὰ στραφῆτε.»
Καὶ πάλιν ὁ νεώτερος οὕτως τὸν ἀπεκρίθη:

975: A good example of this narrative style: the fate of the brother is not followed up, as it is by the solicitous author of G; it is simply of no interest.

978: My supplement from 1012.

979: I adopt the reading of A note *metri causa*.

982: The verse echoes 918 (we might wish to assimilate με and μου), but this time in a respectful way.

988ff: Is this a trick (A note)? At any rate, it is beneath Akrites' dignity.

but again they turned round and went towards the maid.
973a And then Digenes on seeing them
swiftly took out his club and met them:
he picked out one of them and gave him a blow with his club.
At the sight, the remainder bowed down to him then and there.
And their father the general caught up with them there,
weeping and lamenting; he could not bear it.
At the sight Digenes clasped his hands together
and made a deep bow to him as his father-in-law.
And after bowing, listen to what he told him:
'Give me your blessing, sir general, and to your daughter too;
and be sure not to be grieved: you have got a good son-in-law—
if you searched the world over you would not find a better.
And if you wish, lord general, I will do you service—
and then, master, you will see what a son-in-law you have got.'
And then the general spoke thus:
'I thank Thee, good God, for Thy inexpressible foresight
and for Thy love of mankind that Thou hast shown unto me—
for I have got a good son-in-law, such as there is not his like in all the world.
Come back, good youth, to the house of your parents-in-law
in order to take your dowry: three hundred centenaria
(for it is separate from her brothers' inheritance).
And further, for the beauty that we see in her,
I give you my treasure, three measures of centenaria,
and pendants all of gold that she has from her mother.
And may the general's wife see you and may her soul rejoice,
and may we bless you in marriage—and go back then.'
And the youth thus replied:

993–6: In effect, a bribe to preserve the family honour, coming as it does over and above the dowry itself: Akrites is of course honour bound to reject it. The specifying of sums and goods is characteristic of the *Cid*.

998: Here I read στραφῆτε for στραφοῦμεν: the second of the verbs in the sentence has wrongly have been assimilated to the first; it is not clear that the general envisages attending a wedding elsewhere.

«"Αν ἔν' καὶ θέλεις, πενθερέ, νὰ ποίσωμεν τοὺς γάμους,
ἐλᾶτε ἐσεῖς 's τὸν οἶκον μου μετὰ τῆς πενθερᾶς μου
καὶ νὰ μᾶς εὐλογήσουσιν καὶ πάλιν νὰ στραφοῦμεν
καὶ νὰ ἔλθωμεν 's τὸν οἶκον σου, εἰς τὰ πενθερικά μου,
νὰ μᾶς ἰδῇ ἡ στρατήγισσα καὶ νὰ χαρῇ ἡ ψυχή της.
Εἰ δὲ καὶ οὐ θέλεις νὰ ἐλθῇς, ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ὑπαγαίνω·
παίρνω τὴν θυγατέρα σου καὶ ὑπάω 's τὰ γονικά μου.
Τὴν προίκαν ἂς τὴν ἔχουσιν οἱ γυναικαδελφοί μου·
καὶ μόνην κόρην ἔλαβα καὶ τίποτε οὐ χρήζω.»
Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος πηδᾷ, καβαλικεύει
καὶ ἀφότου ἐκαβαλίκευσεν, ὑπάγει εἰς τὸ κοράσιον.
Καὶ τότε δὲ καὶ ὁ στρατηγὸς . . .
κλαίει καὶ κατοδύρεται, οὐκ ἠμπορεῖ ὑπομένειν,
κάθεται καὶ μοιρολογᾷ τὴν ἁρπαγὴν τῆς κόρης.
Τὰ ρέτενα γυρίζουσιν, 's τὰ σπίτια των ὑπᾶσιν
καὶ τότε ἡ στρατήγισσα οὐκ ἠμπορεῖ ὑπομένειν,
κλαίουσα καὶ ὀδυρόμενη τὸν στρατηγὸν ἐλάλει:
«Πῶς ἐσυνέβην εἰς ἐμᾶς καὶ ἐπῆρεν τὸ παιδί μας;
Πάντως ἂς τὸ ἠξεύραμεν καὶ ἂς ἦτον μὲ βουλήν μας
καὶ νὰ τὴν ἀπεβγάλαμεν ὡς πρέπει καὶ ὡς ἀξίζει
καὶ ἐδάρτε μὴ μᾶς ἔφλεγεν ἡ ἁρπαγὴ τῆς κόρης
καὶ πόνον νὰ τὸ ἔχωμεν τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς μας,
νὰ μᾶς φλογίζῃ ὁ πόνος της, τὸ πῶς ὑπάγει μόνη.»
'Ακρίτης δὲ χαιρόμενος μετὰ τῆς ποθητῆς του
ἐκεῖ τὴν ἐπερίλαβε 's τὰς κατακρύας βρύσας
καὶ ἐπῆρεν τὸ κοράσιον καὶ ὑπὰ εἰς τὰ γονικά του.
Πρὶν φθάσῃ εἰς τὸν οἶκον του, ἐνόησεν ὁ πατήρ του

1007: I read προίκαν for the metrically awkward scribalism τὴν δὲ προίκα.

1008: μόνην i.e. without a dowry.

1015–24: This might indicate, but by no means entails, that an earlier scene in the lost section featured a discussion between husband and wife.

1025–6: There is a pointed and amused contrast between νὰ μᾶς φλογίζῃ ὁ πόνος της and κατακρύας βρύσας. It is only now, having enjoyed the

1000 'Father-in-law, if you are willing for us to hold the marriage,
then come to my house with my mother-in-law,
and they shall bless us in marriage—and then we shall come back
and go to your house, the house of my parents-in-law,
that the general's wife may see us and that her soul may rejoice.
1005 But if you are not willing to come—look, I am on my way:
I am taking your daughter and going to my parents' house.
And as for the dowry, let my wife's brothers keep it:
I have just the maid alone and I want for nothing.'
And then the youth mounted and rode;
1010 and he rode and went to the maid;
and then the general
wept and lamented bitterly: he could not bear it;
he sat and mourned the carrying off of the maid.
They turned the reins and they went home.
1015/6 And then the general's wife could not bear it;
weeping and lamenting she spoke to the general:
'How did it happen to us that he took our child?
If at least we had known about it and it had been with our consent,
1020 we could have sent her off as is right and proper,
and the maid's carrying off would not now inflame us.
But we shall have this pain all the years of our lives:
1023/4 pain on her account inflaming us, that she goes off alone.'
1025 But Akrites, rejoicing with the one of his desire,
embraced her then by cool springs,
and took the maid and went to his parents' house.
Before he reached his house his father thought to

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traditional fruits of an abduction, that Akrites sets off for the parental home in order to make the girl his wife.

1028: ἐνόησεν: Akrites' father knew something was up; not that he was in on the whole plan himself; but he was sensible enough to know that a brave young fellow would get up to this sort of thing.

καὶ βίγλας ἔστησεν πολλὰς καὶ ἀναμένασίν τον·
καὶ ὡς εἴδασιν ὅτι ἔρχεται ὁ θαυμαστὸς Ἀκρίτης,
γοργὸν ἐκαβαλίκευσαν ὁ θεῖος καὶ ὁ πατήρ του
καὶ ὅλη του ἡ γενεὰ καὶ τριακόσιοι ἀγοῦροι·
οἱ μὲν τσουκάνας ἔπαιζαν, οἱ ἄλλοι τραγουδοῦσιν.
Καὶ ἡ κόρη, ὡς εἶδε τὸν λαὸν καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τόσον πλῆθος,
. . . πολλὰ τοὺς ἐφοβήθην
καὶ ἀνατρομάζουσα ἔλεγεν τὸν πολυπόθητόν της:
«Ἂν εἶναι, ξένοι, αὐθέντη μου, πάντως νὰ μᾶς χωρίσουν.»
Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος τὴν κόρην οὕτως λέγει:
«Αὐτὸς ὁ πενθερός σου ἐστὶν καὶ δι' ἡμᾶς κοπιάζει.»
Καὶ τότε καὶ ἡ λυγερὴ μεγάλως τὸ ἐχάρη.
καὶ ἀγάλια ἀγάλια ἔλεγεν τὸν πολυπόθητόν της:
«Τί οὐκ ἤκουσες τὸν κύρην μου διὰ νὰ στραφῆς ὀπίσω
καὶ νὰ εἶχα τὰς βαγίας μου καὶ τὴν ἐξόπλισίν μου
καὶ ὅλον μου τὸ συγγενικὸν μετὰ τῆς πενθερᾶς σου
καὶ νὰ ἔγνωκεν καὶ ὁ κύρης σου καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν τὴν δόξαν;»
Καὶ τότε ὁ νεώτερος τέτοια τὴν κόρην λέγει:
«Ὁ κύρης μου τὸν κύρην σου καλὰ τὸν ἐγνωρίζει
καὶ εἰς τοῦτο οὐ μὴ τὸν μέψεται, ὡς διὰ τὴν μοναξίαν.»
Ἔξι συρτὰ ἐπαρέσυρναν καὶ ὑπάντησαν τῆς κόρης
καὶ ἦσαν γυναίκεια, πάντερπνα, τὰ σελοχάλινά των.

καὶ πᾶν εἰς τὸ κοράσιον

1031: Once again, father and uncle together; mother is at home (1065).

1034: A scribal filler.

1035: = EA 1157. The expression here hints at an older version in which the journey home was imperilled by various dangers and especially the raiders. So 1038 νὰ μᾶς χωρίσουν echoes e.g. 1162.

1042ff: She rejoices *but* (καὶ so often has an adversative sense in this text) she fears that she won't be appearing to best advantage. This reference to her father is the last remaining bit of family loyalty.

1048–9: Presumably ironical, and hinting at something mentioned, however

set many sentries and they awaited him;
and when they saw that the wonderful Akrites was on his way,
his father and uncle rode at speed,
with all his family and three hundred lads:
some were playing drums, others singing.
And when the maid saw the throng and when she saw such a multitude,
she was sore afraid of them,
and with a sudden trembling she said to the one of her desire:
'If they are strangers, master, surely they will part us.'
And then the youth spoke thus to the maid:
'This is your father-in-law making his way towards us.'
And then the lissom maid rejoiced greatly at this—
but she said under her breath to the one of her desire:
'Why did you not listen to my father, and turn back,
so that I should have had my maids and my full accoutrement,
and all my kin, including your mother-in-law—
and your father too would have known my glory?'
And then the youth spoke thus to the maid:
'My father well knows your father,
and he will not blame him for our coming on our own.'
Six horses without riders were taken to meet the girl,
and they had delightful ladies' saddles and bridles.

1034 and they go towards the girl

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briefly, in the lost part: 'My father knows that your father was/would have been too haughty to accept me in marriage, so of course he will not be surprised or dissatisfied to see the two of us alone (i.e. without a dowry).' A distorted version is found in the Cypriot song about how Digenes carried off the daughter of King Levantes (Academy 1962: 10–16).

1050: A, with the MS, reads στὴν ἁρπαγὴν τῆς κόρης ('to the abduction of the girl'), odd and compressed Greek. Probably the scribe has absent- mindedly used the formula of 1013 and 1021.

Καὶ ἐπέζευσεν ὁ κύρης του καὶ ἐφίλει καὶ τοὺς δύο
καὶ στέφανα ὁλόχρυσα τὰς κεφαλάς των θέτει
καὶ τὸν Θεὸν παρακαλεῖ καὶ εὐχὰς τὸν ἀναπέμπει:
«Κύριος ὁ πάντων δυνατὸς ἐσᾶς νὰ εὐλογήση,
ὁ κτίσας γῆν καὶ οὐρανὸν καὶ θάλασσαν πεδήσας
καὶ στήσας στῦλον τοῦ πυρὸς ἀνάμεσα πελάγου,
ἀξιώση σας νὰ χαίρεσθε τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς σας.»
'Σ τὴν σέλαν τὴν ἐκάθισεν τὴν μαργαριταρένιαν
καὶ ὁ λαὸς ἐκαβαλίκευσεν μετὰ πολυχρονίων.
Τὰ βότανα ἐλαλούδιζαν καὶ τὰ βουνιὰ ἐψηλῶναν
καὶ τὰ ἄστρη παρασκύπτουσιν εἰς τὴν χαρὰν ἐκείνην.
Καὶ μετὰ πάσης ταραχῆς, μετὰ ὀψικίου μεγάλου,
'ς τὸν οἶκον του ἀπέσωσεν, μέσα εἰς τὰ γονικά του,
καὶ τῶν δύο των εὐχήθηκεν ἡ μήτηρ καὶ ὁ πατήρ του.
Καὶ ὁ Ἔρως ἐξεπλέρωσε πάσας των τὰς ἐλπίδας·
καὶ πάντα τὰ θελήματα καὶ τὰ ἐξαρέσκιά του,
τοῦ Ἔρωτος τοῦ ἡδονικοῦ, χαρμονικῶς τελοῦσιν.

(Ὁ δὲ τοῦ 'Ακρίτη πενθερός, ὁ θαυμαστὸς ἐκεῖνος,
ἀφότου ἀπεχαιρέτησεν 'Ακρίτην τὸν γαμπρόν του,
καὶ ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον του καὶ ἐθρήνησε μεγάλως,
χαρίσματα οἰκονόμησεν ὅτι νὰ τοῦ ἀποστείλη:
Δώδεκα πάρδους διαλεκτοὺς ἀπὸ Συρίαν ἀπέσω,
μουλάρια δώδεκα βλατὶν σελοχαλινωμένα,
καὶ χυμευτάρια ὁλόχρυσα, ὡς καὶ βαγίτσες δέκα
καὶ ἀτσουπάδας δώδεκα ὡς διὰ ὑποταγήν του.

1061–2: Nature, with a certain grandeur, as part of the general joy and good order; MG χαρά = both 'joy' and 'wedding'.

1066–68: Love lightly personified: here his whims have worked out well for the couple; the story reaches its happy ending with a return to the theme of the proem.

1069ff: The MS continues with a coda which was certainly added before G (which offers a coherent account of a double celebration). But it is my contention that this passage did not appear in the original romance. The aim of the poet who added it—and such additions to MSS are commonplace in medieval and early modern Greek texts (there is a good example in ARM)—was to soften the

And his father dismounted and kissed the pair of them
and put crowns all of gold on their heads,
and begged God and sent prayers to Him:
'May the Lord Almighty bless you:
He who built Earth and Heaven and bound the sea,
He who set a pillar of fire in the sea;
may he judge you fit to rejoice all the years of your lives.'
He sat her on the pearly saddle
and the throng rode with hurrahs.
The herbs blossomed and the mountains grew tall,
and the stars stooped to that celebration.
And with a great stir, with a great procession,
they reached his house, his parents' home;
and his mother and father blessed the pair of them.
And Love fulfilled all their hopes;
and all the wishes and whims
of pleasant Love they joyfully fulfilled.

(But Akrites' father-in-law, that wonderful one,
when he had said good-bye to Akrites his son-in-law,
and gone to his house and lamented greatly,
arranged to send him gifts:
twelve fine pards from Syria;
twelve mules saddled and bridled, bearing tapestries;
enamelled gold jewellery; ten maids
and twelve negro bodyguards to be in his service.

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harshness of the story, in which the general and his wife are humiliated: it was felt that the family life of the young couple ought, in the end, to conform to the norm. Hence the chiming emphasis on χαιρόμενος - ἐχαίρετον (1085–6). (An indication that the story's new ending is superficially cobbled together comes in the palpable contradiction between 1071 and 1085.) But the harshness cannot be ironed out so easily: Akrites' heroism entails the humiliation of the general, who has refused a good offer which has its attractions from the military point of view (985).

Καὶ ἀνήβαινεν ἡ προῖκα του κἂν τριακοσίας χιλιάδας.
Καὶ εἰκόνες ὁλοχυμευτὲς τοὺς τρεῖς ἀρχιστρατήγους
καὶ εἶχαν λιθάρια ἀτίμητα, λυχνίτας καὶ ὑακίνθους,
καὶ τοῦ Σχοδρόη τὸ σπαθίν, τὸ θαυμαστὸν ἐκεῖνον.
Ἐδῶκαν του καὶ λέοντα, θηρίον ἡμερωμένον,
καὶ ἡ κόρη τὸν ἐχαίρετον καὶ ὁ νεώτερος Ἀκρίτης.
Καὶ ἐκράτησεν ὁ γάμος τους τρεῖς μῆνας ἀκεραίους·
καὶ μετὰ τὴν συμπλήρωσιν τῶν τριῶν μηνῶν ἐκείνων
ὁ στρατηγὸς χαιρόμενος ὑπὰ εἰς τὰ γονικά του.
Καὶ ὁ νεώτερος ἐχαίρετον μετὰ καὶ τῆς καλῆς του
εἰς τόπους ὑπολίβαδους καὶ ὅπου κατάσκια δένδρη
καὶ ὕδατα ψυχρότατα, μόνος μὲ τὴν καλήν του.⟩

And his dowry was as much as three thousand;
with in addition enamelled icons of the three Arch-Generals
with priceless stones, rubies and hyacinths;
and the sword of Chosroes, that wonderful thing.
And he gave them also a lion, a tamed beast,
and the maid and the youth Akrites rejoiced in it.
And their wedding lasted three whole months;
and after the end of those three months
the general rejoicing went to his ancestral home.
And the youth rejoiced with his loved one
in pastures with shady trees
and cool waters, alone with his loved one.)

1086–8: These verses, which may reflect the similar scene at EA 1374–7, perhaps belong to the poem EA which follows, with some confusion, in the MS.

«Ἆ θέλης, ἂς παλεύσωμεν ἢ ἂς δώσωμεν ραβδέας· 1100
ἕτοιμος εἶμαι πανταχοῦ καὶ ὅπου κελεύεις ἔλα.»
Καὶ πάλιν μὲ ἀνέδειξεν ὀρέαν τὴν δρακοντέαν

Ὁ θαυμαστὸς Καππάδοκας Βασίλειος Ἀκρίτης, 1092
ἀφῶν τὴν κόρην ἥρπαξεν ἀπὸ τὰ γονικά της,
ἀπῆλθεν εἰς τὸν οἶκον του καὶ ἐφίλησαν τὰ δύο.
Κατέλαβεν ὁ θάνατος κ' ἔθανον οἱ γονεῖς του
καὶ μοναχὸς ἀπέμεινεν μετὰ τῆς ποθητῆς του.
Ἐξέβηκεν ὁ Διγενὴς ἵνα παραδιαβάση. 1077
Καὶ ὁ Θεὸς οὐκ ἤθελεν ἵνα τὸν ἀπολέση: 1091
ἀνάμεσα γὰρ τῆς ὁδοῦ, καθὼς ἐπεριπάτει, 1089
φωνὴ παρὰ τοῦ δράκοντος εἰς τὸν Ἀκρίτην ἦλθεν 1090
καὶ ὑπάντησέν του ὁ δράκοντας καὶ ἀπάνου του ὑπαγαίνει· 1098
καὶ τότε δὲ καὶ ὁ Διγενὴς τὸν δράκοντα οὕτως λέγει:

1092–9: This section is exceptionally disordered, and I have replaced it with the summary. As they appear in the MS the verses are the combination of two things: (i) a necessary (but bungled) introduction to the first-person narrative which ends at 1598: the original version was perhaps of the same brevity as the final section (1599ff); and (ii) a linking passage (like AR 610–21) designed to tie the story into a sort of biography of Akrites. It seems likely, though not absolutely certain, that the episodes take place on the very journey home of the couple: see 1373–5; 1300 καὶ μόνην κόρην ἔλαβα which reappears as RA 1008; and the account in RDA 1787–9. Nothing in 1092–9 is such as to convince that it was not cooked up, say,

Exploits of Akrites (as told by himself)

In the early days of his life with his loved one, Akrites was once travelling with her. Listen to how the hero tells the story himself: 'We came across an ogre, and it headed towards us; and I said to it:

1100 "If you wish, let us wrestle or fight with clubs:
I am ready on all sides, and wherever you want, come on."
And again he showed me his dragon's tail,

1092 The wonderful Cappadocian, Basil Akrites,
when he had carried off the maid from her parental home,
went home, and the two loved one another.
1095 Death possessed his parents and they died,
and he remained all alone with the one of his desire.
1077 Digenes went on an excursion;
1091 and God did not wish to destroy him;
1089 for on the way as he went,
1090 a voice from an ogre came to Akrites,
1098 and the ogre met him and bore down on him
and then Digenes spoke thus to the ogre:

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by a scribe struggling with an akephalic MS of EA; we cannot be sure of the loss; and G's account, too, (6 *init.*) looks like desperate improvisation. In this poem there is no focus on the conflict between two families; the emphasis is unashamedly exotic, concerning natural and supernatural frontier legends, and it is perhaps no accident that the material is narrated, for greater conviction, by the hero himself.

1100–1: These three-formed δράκοι or ogres were proverbial in the region, and are mentioned in Kekaumenos' *Strategikon*. The ogre appeared first in the guise of a young man (RDA 1741–2), and then resorted to its dragon shape. On the

καὶ τέτοια λόγια μὲ λαλεῖ, ὡς διὰ νὰ μ' ἐντραλίση:
«Τίποτε, 'Ακρίτη, οὐ θέλω νὰ δοκιμαστῶ μετ' ἔσου·
οὐ θέλω νὰ παλεύσωμεν, εἰς ἁρπαγὴν ὑπάγω·
ἀνάμενε ὥραν, ἄγουρε, νὰ πάρω τὴν καλήν σου,
εἰδέ, πλανᾶται ἡ νεότης σου, νὰ χάσης τὴν ζωήν σου.»
Καθὼς εἶπεν τὸν λόγον του καὶ ἐλάλει μετὰ μένα,
ταῦτα μεταμορφώνεται, τρεῖς κεφαλὰς μὲ δείχνει:
ἡ μία ἦτον γέροντος, ἡ ἄλλη νεωτέρου,
ἡ δὲ μεσαία ὄφεως, δράκοντος τῆς γεέννης.
Καὶ ὡς ἤκουσα τὴν ἀπειλὴν καὶ τὸν λόγον τὸν εἶπεν,
καὶ ἡ ψυχή μου ἐτρόμαξεν καὶ ὡσὰν ν' ἀκροφοβήθην.
Καὶ Θεὸς ὁ πάντων δυνατὸς οὐ θέλει νὰ μὲ χάση:
ἐβάστουν τὸ σπαθίν μου εἰς τὸ ἀριστερόν μου μέρος·
τὴν ποθητήν μου ἐπέζευσα, κάτω τὴν ἀποθέτω
καὶ τὸ σπαθίν μου ἐξέσυρα . . .
καὶ εἰς μίαν σπαθίαν πάραυτα τὲς τρεῖς ἀντάμα ἐπαίρνω·
καὶ ὁ κορνιακτὸς τοῦ δράκοντος ἐστύλωσεν μεγάλως.
Καὶ τὸ κοράσιο ἐγέλασεν, μεγάλως τὸ ἀποδέχθην
καὶ σὺν ἐκείνης τῆς χαρᾶς πάλιν γελᾶ ἡ κόρη.
Καὶ ὁ συρισμὸς τοῦ δράκοντος, τὸ γέλιον τῆς καλῆς μου
λέοντας μέγας τὸ ἤκουσεν ἀπέσω ἀπὲ καλάμιν·
καὶ κτύπον ἤκουσα οὐρᾶς καὶ τὰ πλευρά του δέρνει,
καὶ ἐκ τὸ καλάμι ἐξέβηκεν ὡς θάλασσα ἀγριωμένη.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τὸ θηρίον ἐμὲν καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τὴν καλήν μου,

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evidence of MG folk song (e.g. Academy 1962:19) we may hazard that the couple were by water at this point, and RA 1086–8 would fit this if its real place were here.

1104–5: I have emended A's οὐ θέλω σε· δοκιμαστῶ μετ' ἔσου / οὐ θέλω, νὰ παλεύσωμεν, εἰς ἁρπαγὴν νὰ πᾶμε. In the first place this removes an unparalleled type of enjambement; furthermore it substitutes for the remoter idea of a competition in abduction (not mentioned in 1100–1, though it might just receive some sanction from AR 668) an immediate threat to the girl here, in a phrase which Akrites uses of his rather different designs in RA 803.

and said such words to frighten me:
"I have no wish to try conclusions with you, Akrites;
I do not want to wrestle: I am off on an abduction.
Wait a little, lad, for me to take your loved one—
if not, your youth is led astray, for you to lose your life."
As he said these words and spoke to me,
he changed his form and showed me three heads:
one was an old man's, the other a young man's,
the third that of a serpent, a dragon of Gehenna.
And when I heard the threat in the words he spoke
my soul was a-tremble and I was somewhat afraid.
But Almighty God did not wish to lose me.
I was holding my sword on my left side;
I dismounted the one of my desire, set her down,
and drew my sword—
and with one blow of my sword took off all three heads at once,
and the dust made by the dragon formed a great pillar.
And the maid laughed and took this very merrily,
and in that joy the maid laughed once again.
But the dragon's hissing and my loved one's laughter
were heard by a great lion from inside a reed-bed;
and I heard the shaking of his tail as he beat his flanks,
and he came out from the reed-bed like a sea in wild mood.
And when the beast saw me and when he saw my loved one

1113: The only slight admission of fear on the part of the hero in all the E poems—apart from the scene with the angel of death (RDA 1766–7)—concerns this supernatural sight (though cf. 1538).

1117: We might supplement from 1268: καὶ εἰς αὗτον κατεβαίνω.

1120: The girl in EA is always a foil: she is the link between all the disparate exploits (with e.g. 1122 showing a certain wit in producing a hectic sequence of events, and the whole sequence centred around sounds rather than sights), but she has no real identity of her own. At e.g. 1131 her role is that of young women in horror films.

ἐσήκωσεν τὸ οὐράδιν του καὶ τὰ πλευρά του δέρνει,
τοὺς ὀφθαλμούς του ἐθόλωσεν, βούλεται νὰ μᾶς φάγῃ.
Καὶ τότε τὸ κοράσιον ἀπήλπισεν τελείως
καὶ ἐμὲν τὰ τέτοια ἐλάλησεν βλέποντα τὸ θηρίον:
«Βλέπε, ἀφέντη μου καλέ, τὸν λέοντα μὴ μᾶς φάγῃ.»
Καὶ ἀναπηδῶ ἐκ τὴν κλίνην μου, πηδῶ ἔξω τῆς τέντας·
γοργὸν ἐπῆρα τὸ σπαθὶν καὶ προσυπήντησά του·
καὶ ἐγὼ πάντοτε ἐσπούδαζα ἵνα τονὲ προλάβω
καὶ ἐκεῖνος εἶχεν τὴν βουλὴν ἵνα μὲ ἀποπέσῃ,
καὶ ἀνέκλασεν τὸ οὐράδιν του καὶ ἀπάνου μου κατέβη.
Καὶ μίαν σπαθέαν τοῦ ἔδωσα 'ς τὰς δισσουμέας ἀπάνω
καὶ ἡ κεφαλή του ἐχώθηκεν ἀπέσωθεν τῆς βάλτης.
Καὶ ἀπῆρα τὸ κοράσιον, 'ς τὴν τέντα μου ὑπάγω
καὶ ἡ κόρη οὕτως λέγει με, οὕτω παρακαλεῖ με:
«Νὰ ἐπιχαρῇς τὰ κάλλη μου, τὴν περισσήν σου ἀνδρείαν,
ἔπαρε τὸ λαβοῦτο σου καὶ παῖξε το ὀλίγον,
ὅτι ἐραθύμησα, ‹καλέ›, ἐκ τῶν θηρίων τὸν φόβον
καὶ ἠγρίωσεν ἡ καρδία μου ἐκ τῶν θηρίων τὸ αἷμα.»
Καὶ ἐπῆρα τὸ λαβοῦτο μου καὶ θέλω νὰ ἀκροπαίξω
καὶ εὐθέως δὲ καὶ ἡ λυγερὴ τραγούδημαν ἐλάλει:
«Εὐχαριστῶ τοὺς Ἔρωτας, καλὸν ἄνδρα μ' ἐδῶκαν·
νὰ τὸν θωρῶ, νὰ χαίρωμαι τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς μου.»
Καὶ ἐκ τὸν ἠχὸν τοῦ θαμπουρίου καὶ ἐκ τὸν ἠχὸν τῆς κόρης
κτύπος ἐβγῆκε εἰς τὰ βουνά, τὰ ὄρη ἐκιλαδοῦσαν.
Οἱ ἀπελάτες θαυμάζουσιν τὴν ἡδονὴν τῆς κόρης·
ζῆλος ἐνέπεσε εἰς αὐτοὺς ἵνα τὴν ἀφαρπάξουν
καὶ ἀπὸ μακρέας φωνάζουσιν ἀναίσχυντα λαλίας:
«Ἄφες, καλέ, τὴν λυγερὴν καὶ σῶσε τὸν ἑαυτόν σου·

1132: The narrative is admirably compressed: evidently 1120–1 ushered in a love scene.

1147: The Loves are plural in this poem (cf. 1477) which might indicate a different original audience and fashionable notion of love from RA.

1148: Like RA 822, but more immediately, this ushers danger in.

he lifted his tail and beat his flanks;
he grew dull of eye and was minded to devour us.
And then the maid was in utter despair,
and on seeing the beast spoke to me thus:
"Good master, see that the lion not devour us."
And I leapt up from my bed and leapt out of the tent:
swiftly I took my sword and met him.
And I was trying my best to intercept him;
but he was minded to attack me;
and he gave a crack of his tail and bore down on me.
But I gave him a blow with my sword on his two shoulders
and his head sunk into the marsh.
And I took the maid and went to my tent;
and the maid thus addressed me and asked me thus:
"That you may enjoy my beauty and your exceeding valour,
take your lute and play it a little:
for I am listless, my good man, from fear of the beasts,
and my heart has grown savage from the blood of the beasts."
And I took my lute, wishing to play it a little,
and straightaway the lissom maid sang a song:
"I thank the Loves: they gave me a good husband—
may I behold him and may I rejoice all the days of my life."
And from the sound of the tabor and the sound of the maid
a din arose in the hills, the mountains sang.
The raiders admired the charms of the maid:
zeal came upon them to carry her off;
and from a distance they called out shameless words:
"Good fellow, leave the lissom maid behind and save yourself:

1151: The first appearance of the raiders themselves: their old-style abduction will be pitted against the new, romantic kind.

1154–5: καλέ here may have the MG connotations of exasperation.And in traditional terms the raiders are quite right to point out that Akrites has enjoyed the fruits of abduction already.

σώνουν τὰ τὴν ἐφίλησες καὶ τὴν περιεπλάκης
καὶ μὴ πλανᾶται ἡ νεότης σου νὰ χάσης τὴν ζωήν σου.»
Καὶ ἡ κόρη ὡς εἶδεν τὸν λαὸν καὶ ὡς εἶδε τόσον πλῆθος,
καὶ εἶχαν ἄρματα καλά, ἱππάρια ἀφιρωμένα,
καὶ ἐξοπλισμένοι δυνατὰ καὶ ἦσαν λουρικιασμένοι,
τὰ λόγια ταῦτα ἐπίστευσεν καὶ ἐμὲν τοιαῦτα ἐλάλει:
«'Οϊμέν, ἀφέντη μου καλέ, βέβαιον νὰ μᾶς χωρίσουν.»
Σφικτὰ σφικτὰ μὲ ἐφίλησεν καὶ οὕτως μὲ συντυχαίνει:
«Αὐθέντη μου, ἂς φιλήσωμεν τῆς ἀποχωρισίας.»
Κλαίουσα γὰρ μὲ ἔλεγεν ἐκ στεναγμοῦ καρδίας:
«Σήμερον χωριζόμεθα, τίς νὰ τὸ ὑπομένη;»
'Εγὼ δὲ τότε ἐγέλασα καὶ τὸ κοράσιον λέγω:
«Καλὰ λέγεις, κοράσιον; Οὕτως μὲ συντυχαίνεις;
'Εμᾶς ὁ Θεὸς ‹μᾶς› ἔσμιξεν, ἄνθρωποι οὐ χωρίζουν.
Δός μου, ξανθή, ὑπολούρικον, δός μου καὶ τὸ ραβδίν μου
καὶ βλέπε, αὐθέντρια καὶ κυρά, τὸ τί τοὺς θέλω ποίσει.»
Γοργὸν ἐπῆρα τὸ ραβδὶν καὶ προσυπήντησά τους
καὶ ἐκεῖνοι ἐμὲν ἐκρούγασιν καὶ ἐξέβαιναν οἱ κτύποι
καὶ ἐγὼ ὅσον τοὺς ἤκρουγα ἐγίνονταν οἱ φόνοι·
καὶ ἡ γῆ τοὺς ἐδαπάνησεν, ψυχῇ τιμωρουμένους,
καὶ ἦτον κορνιακτὸς πολὺς κ' ἦτον καὶ ἀνεμοζάλη.
Καὶ τότε ὅσοι ἔφευγαν καὶ οὐδὲν τοὺς ἐθεώρουν,
. . . δι' αὐτοὺς μὲ κόπτει ὁ πόνος,
καὶ ἡ λύπη νὰ μὲ συνταφῇ καὶ θλίψιν νὰ τὸ ἔχω,
ὅτι ὄνταν ἐθερμάθηκα οὐκ ηὕρισκα νὰ κόπτω.

σήμερον ἀπ' ἀλλήλων.

1163: I omit this half-verse as a gloss breaking the sequence of, not two (cf. RA 810ff, LE 21ff), but three utterances of the girl, each of just one verse.

1170: Not proof that they are already officially married: an acknowledgement of oaths made, perhaps, (as at RA 901), and a more impressive and defiant way of repeating 1147, which the girl says privately and in song.

1155 you have kissed and embraced her enough—
and let not your youth be led astray that you lose your life."
And when the maid saw the throng and when she saw such a multitude
1159 —and they had fine arms and armoured horses;
1160 and they were mightily armed and they wore breastplates—
she believed these words and addressed me thus:
"Alas, my good master, it is certain that they will part us."
1164 Tightly, tightly she kissed me and thus conversed with me:
1165 "Master, let us kiss our parting kiss."
And weeping she said to me with a sigh from the heart:
"Today we are parted—who could withstand it?"
And then I laughed and said to the maid:
"Is it right what you say, maid? Is this how you speak to me?
We have been joined by God; men will not part us.
1171 Blonde, give me my leather breastplate and give me my club;
and see what I shall do to them, lady mistress."
Swiftly I took my club and met them,
and they struck at me and a mere din arose—
1175 but when I struck at them there were slayings;
and the earth consumed them, tormented at heart,
and there was much dust and there was a whirlwind.
(But over those who had taken to flight and were no longer to be seen
over them I am gashed by pain;
1180 and the grief will be buried with me, and I shall have it as an affliction
that when my blood was up I could find no-one else to slash.)

1163 today from one another

1171: A rare physical detail, but the epithet is almost as conventional as λυγερή, which has really become a noun.

1176: A strange observation even as emended by A; it is perhaps corrupt.

1179–81: A pun: pain κόπτει Akrites for the ones he does not κόπτει.

Καὶ τότε ἀπομερίμνησα τὸ κρούειν καὶ τὸ λαμβάνειν·
στρέφομαι, περιβλέπομαι ὡς διὰ τὴν ποθητήν μου
καὶ βλέπω την καὶ ἐκάθητον ἀπάνω εἰς τὸ κλινάριν
καὶ ἔχυσα τὰ μανίκια μου καὶ πρὸς αὐτὴν ὑπάγω.
Καὶ ἐκείνη ἐκατεπήδησεν καὶ πρὸς ἐμένα ἦλθεν·
κρύον νερὸν μὲ ἔφερεν δοκοῦσα ὅτι ἐκουράσθην,
ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν ἐλάλησα καὶ οὕτως μὲ συντυχαίνει:
«Πίε νερόν, αὐθέντη μου, ὅτι πολλὰ ἐκουράσθης.» 1189
«Καλή, ὡς οὐκ ηὕρηκα τινὰν νὰ μὲ παραπονέση, 1191
καὶ νὰ σταθῇ εἰς τὸ πλάγι μου καὶ ἐμπλήση με ραβδέας
πῶς ἤθελα νὰ κουρασθῶ δίχως καμίας ἀνάγκης;
'Αλλ' ὕπαγε εἰς τὴν τέντα μου καὶ φέρε μου ν' ἀλλάξω
καὶ τὰ φορῶ τὰ ἐρύπησα εἰς τὸ αἷμα τῶν ἀνθρώπων.»
Καὶ ἡ κόρη ὑπὰ εἰς τὴν κλίνην μου νὰ φέρη μου ν' ἀλλάξω
κ' ἐγὼ ηὕρηκα σκιὸν δενδροῦ καὶ ἐκούμπισα εἰς τὴν ρίζαν.
Καὶ ὅσον νὰ ὑπάγη ἡ λυγερὴ νὰ φέρη μου νὰ ἀλλάξω,
τρεῖς καβελάροι ἀνέβαιναν τὴν παρεποταμίαν:
'Ο εἷς ἦτον νεώτερος, ἀγένειον παλληκάριν 1200
καὶ ὁ ἄλλος ἦτον κουρευτός, γέρων ἐξοπλισμένος,
καὶ ὁ ἀπεκεῖ τὸ γένειον εἶχε νὰ στεφανώνη.
Καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἀντάμα ἐστάθησαν καὶ οὕτως μὲ συντυχαίνουν:
«Μὴν ἀπ' ἐδῶ νὰ ἐδιάβησαν, νεώτερε, ἀπελάτες;»
'Εγὼ δ' οὐκ ἐφοβήθην τους ἵνα τοὺς προσεγέρθω
ἢ νὰ τοὺς κρύψω τίποτες ἐκ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνδρείαν·
κάθομαι καὶ διηγοῦμαι τους περὶ τοὺς ἀπελάτας:
«῎Αρχοντες, ἦρθαν εἰς ἐμὲν νὰ ἐπάρουν τὴν καλήν μου

Καὶ ἐγὼ πάλιν τὴν λέγω

1190: A filler: the *verbum dicendi* is not required, especially when the addressee is named (cf. e.g. *Cid* 2195).

1200: A proverbial trio (and as A points out, an analogy of the ogre, cf. 1243). The second is Philopappous; unlike the original audience, we cannot be sure

But when I had had enough of giving and taking of blows,
I turned and looked round for the one of my desire;
and I saw her, and she was sitting on the bed;
and I slipped off my gauntlets and went to her.
And she leapt down and came to me:
she brought me cold water, thinking that I was tired;
and I spoke to her, and thus she spoke:
"Drink some water, my master, for you are very tired."
"Loved one, I have found no-one to do me hurt,
to stand at close quarters and give me my fill of club-blows—
how do you think I could get tired without anything to make me?
Instead go to my tent and bring me a change of clothes,
for the ones I am wearing I have soiled with the blood of men."
And the maid went to my bed to bring me a change of clothes;
and I found the shade of a tree and leant at its root.
And in the time that it took for the lissom maid to bring me a change of clothes,
three horsemen came along the riverside.
The one was a youth, a beardless brave,
the second crop-headed, an old man in armour,
and the third had a beard round his face.
And the three stood together and thus conversed with me:
"Young man, have raiders perhaps passed this way?"
But I was not in awe of them, so as to get up and greet them,
or to conceal from them my valour at all;
I sat and told them about the raiders:
"Lords, they came to me to take my loved one;

1190 And I in turn say to her

---

about the other two, but AR 633 might suggest that Giannakes is the youngest. There would be a neatness, too, to an ascending order of age from 1269ff, which is in other respects a carefully arranged sequence.

1204: Tricksters, unlike their opponent (1206).

καὶ ἐγώ, ὡς μὲ ἐλέγασιν, ἵνα τὴν ἐξαφήσω,
ὅτι εἶχαν πόθον εἰς αὐτὴν ἄπειρον τε καὶ μέγαν.
Καὶ ἄρματα οὐκ εἶχα μετ' ἐμέν, ἄλογον οὐδὲ ἕνα·
μὲ τῆς μητρός μου τὴν εὐχὴν πεζὸς ὑπῆγα εἰς αὔτους
καὶ τὸ κακὸν τὸ ἐπάθασιν οὐ μὴ σᾶς ἔχει λάθειν.»
Καὶ εὐθὺς οἱ τρεῖς, ὡς τὸ ἤκουσαν, παράξενον ἐφάνη·
ἀλλήλως ἐβλεμμάτισαν καὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους λέγουν:
«Μὴ τοῦτος εἶν' τὸν λέγουσιν ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης;
Ἀλλὰ ἂς τὸν δοκιμάσωμεν κἂν εἷς ἀπὸ τοὺς τρεῖς μας
καὶ εἰς μίαν ν' ἀπεικάσωμεν ὅτι ἀληθῶς μᾶς λέγει.»
Καὶ εἷς ἐξ αὐτῶν μὲ ἐλάλησεν, δοκῶ, τὸν εἶχαν πρῶτον:
«Ἐκεῖνοι, τοὺς γυρεύγομεν καὶ τοὺς καταρωτοῦμεν,
τριακόσιοι εἶναι ἐσωλούρικοι μετὰ καὶ τῶν ἀρμάτων
καὶ ἐσὲν θεωροῦμεν μοναχόν, πεζὸν μὲ τὸ καλίκιν
καὶ μὲ τὸ μοναπλούτσικον, καὶ πῶς τοὺς εἶχες τρέψειν;
Ἀμὲ ἂν λαλῆς ἀλήθειαν, ὡς λέγεις καὶ ὡς καυχᾶσαι,
ἕναν ἐκλέξου ἀφ' ἡμῶν, ὃν θέλεις καὶ κελεύεις,
καὶ αὐτὸς νὰ ἔλθη πρὸς ἐσὲν καὶ δότε οἱ δύο ραβδέας
καὶ τότε νὰ νοήσωμεν ὅτι ἀληθῶς μᾶς λέγεις.»
Γοργὸν ἐκατεπήδησα καὶ ἐστάθην ἔμπροσθέν των
καὶ λόγους τοὺς ἐλάλησα οὐχὶ πρὸς καυχησίαν:
«Μά τὸν ἐξουσιαστὴν Χριστόν, ὃν τρέμει πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις,
ἀφῶν ἠρξάμην πολεμεῖν εἰς ἕναν οὐκ ἐβγῆκα:
εἰς χιλίους ἐκατέβηκα καὶ εἰς τετρακισχιλίους
καὶ ἦσαν ὁλοσίδεροι καὶ τετραλυγισμένοι
καὶ εἶχαν ἄρματα καλά, ἱππάρια ἀφιρωμένα,
καὶ ἐδὰ ἄρτε εἰς ἕναν μοναχὸν θέλω νὰ πολεμήσω;
Ὑπᾶτε καὶ πεζεύσετε καὶ ἐλᾶτε οἱ τρεῖς εἰς ἕναν,
εἰ δὲ καὶ καταδέχεσθε, ἐλᾶτε καβαλάροι.»

1216: The hero's fame has spread; but this needn't have been indicated more than synoptically in the introduction.
1219: Still no names until 1243, when Philopappous states them in boastful vein.

and, so they said, for me to abandon her—
for they had great and boundless desire for her.
And I had no arms with me, not a single horse:
with my mother's blessing I went against them on foot;
and the evil that they suffered will not escape your notice."
And when the three heard it, it seemed amazing to them:
they looked at each other and said to each other,
"Is he perhaps the one they call Digenes Akrites?
But let us try conclusions with him, one of us,
and ascertain at once whether he is telling the truth."
And one of them said to me (I think he was the leader):
"The ones we are after and asking about
are three hundred in number with breastplates and arms—
but we see you all alone, on foot in boots,
and with a single tunic. How could you have turned them to flight?
But if you are telling the truth, as you say and boast,
pick one of us as you wish and bid,
and he will come to you, and the two of you will deal club-blows,
and then we shall see if you are telling the truth."
Swiftly I leapt down and stood before them
and spoke words to them not in boast:
"By all-powerful Christ, at whom all Creation trembles,
since I started to do battle I have never gone out against one:
I have gone out against a thousand and against four thousand;
and all of them clad in iron and lissom,
and with fine arms and armoured horses.
And now I am to fight a single man on his own?
Come and dismount and come all three against me—
or, if you will stoop to this, come on horseback!"

1230–7: A more military boast than that of AR 670–6. Note the word-play in 1232–3 on τετρα-.

Καὶ εἶς ἐξ αὐτῶν μὲ ἐλάλησεν, δοκῶ, τὸν εἶχαν πρῶτον
«Αὐτὰ εἰς ἐμὲν μηδὲν τὰ εἰπῇς, νὰ ἔχωμεν καταδίκην
‹καὶ νὰ μᾶς ὀνειδίζουσιν› καὶ αὔριον νὰ τὸ καυχᾶσαι,
ὅτι ἀπελάτες θαυμαστοὶ ἐσέναν πολεμοῦσιν:
ἐγὼ εἶμαι ὁ Φιλοπαππούς, Κίνναμος καὶ Γιαννάκης.»
Καὶ ἐγλήγορα ἐπήδησεν ἀπὸ τὸ ἄλογόν του
καὶ σύρνει τὸ σπαθίτσιν του καὶ σύντομα ἐκατέβην,
καὶ ὥστε νὰ πάρω τὸ σπαθὶν ἐκ τοῦ δενδροῦ τὴν ρίζαν,
σπαθέαν μίαν μὲ ἔδωκεν εἰς τὸ χεροσκουτάριν.
Καὶ ἦτον ὁ γέρων δυνατὸς καὶ τὸ ἄρμαν του καινούργιον
καὶ μοναχὸν τὸ κράτημαν μ' ἀπόμεινε εἰς τὸ χέριν·
τοῦ σκουταρίου τσακίσματα ἔπεσαν ἔμπροσθέν μου.
Καὶ τότε τὸν ἐλάλησαν: «Φιλοπαππού, ἄλλην μίαν!»
Καὶ ἐγὼ οὐκ ἐκατεδέχθην το ἵνα μοῦ δευτερώσῃ·
δαμὶν ἐπιστοπόδησα καὶ δίδω του ραβδέαν
καὶ εἰς μίαν ἔπεσαν τὰ ἄρματα καὶ ἀπὸ τὰς δύο του χεῖρας
καὶ ἐστέναξεν, ἐδάκρυσεν ὁ γέρων καὶ ὑπηγαίνει.
Καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι συνεσπούδαζαν καὶ ἐπέπεσάν με οἱ δύο
καὶ τότε ἐνόησα πόλεμον καλῶν παλληκαρίων:
εἰς τὸ κρούειν καὶ εἰς τὸ δέχεσθαι ηὕρηκα τὸν Γιαννάκην
καὶ εἰς τὰ πυκνογυρίσματα τὸν Κίνναμον τὸν Λέον.
Εἰς αὖτον τὸν νοῦν ἔβαλα, κρυφῶς νὰ μὴ μὲ δώσῃ,
καὶ τὴν καλήν μου ἐλάλησα φωνὴν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν:
«Ἄρτε, καλή μου, πέρασε τὰ κρύα καὶ τὰ χιονάτα
καὶ φέρε μου ὑπολούρικον, διὰ νὰ κρατῶ εἰς τὸ χέριν,
ἵνα τοὺς ποίσω τὸ γοργὸν νὰ φύγουν ἔμπροσθέν μου.»
Καὶ ἐκείνη ἐπιβουλεύτη με καὶ φέρνει μου ἱματίτσιν·
καὶ ἐγὼ ἐκ τὴν βίαν μου τὴν πολλὴν τυλίγω το εἰς τὸ χέριν
. . . καὶ εἰς αὖτους κατεβαίνω.

1241: My supplement from LE 519: καὶ νὰ μᾶς τ' ὀνειδίζουσιν.
1261: Foul play, as at 1247, expected from Philopappous, the oldest and most crafty one.

And one of them said to me (I think he was the leader):
"Do not say these things to me, lest we be subject to condemnation,
and they reproach us and you boast tomorrow
that wonderful raiders did battle with you.
I shall be Philopappous, Kinnamos and Giannakes."
And swiftly he leapt down from his horse
and drew his sword and soon came down;
and before I could take my sword from the root of the tree,
he gave me a blow with his sword on my buckler.
And the old man was mighty and his weapon new,
and only the handle was left in my hand,
and the shield fell in pieces before me.
And then they called to him: "Philopappous, give him another!"
But I was not going to have him do this to me a second time:
I stepped back a little and gave him a blow with my club;
and at once the weapons fell from his two hands,
and he groaned and wept, the old man, and went on his way.
But the other two hurried on and fell on me—
and then I saw battle with fine braves.
Giving and taking blows I got Giannakes,
and with many a turn I got Leos Kinnamos—
of the other one I took care lest he strike me unawares.
And I called out to my loved one from afar:
"Now, good woman, cross the cold and snowy stream
and bring me a jerkin breastplate for me to hold in my hand,
that I may make them flee from me at once."
But she wished me evil and brought me a tunic,
and I in my great haste wound it round my hand
and went to meet them.

1266: Surely with the sense: 'And the girl was nearly my undoing!'
1268: A possible supplement: τυλίγω το εἰς τὸ χέριν μου; compare *Cid* 2284, where the hero doesn't even take this precaution.

Τὸν Γιαννάκην ἐχώρισα, διὰ νὰ τὸν δοκιμάσω,
καὶ ἐκεῖνος μὲ ἐπέβλεπεν, ἵνα σπαθέαν μὲ δώση,
καὶ ἐξηστρεφτὴν τοῦ ἔδωσα ἀπάνω εἰς τὸν βραχίοναν
καὶ τὸ σπαθίν του ἐξέπεσεν κ' ἡ χεῖρα του ἐκρεμάστην
καὶ ἀνάσκελα ἐξήπλωσεν ὁ θαυμαστὸς Γιαννάκης.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τοῦτο ὁ Κίνναμος πηδᾶ, καβαλικεύει
καὶ ἀπάνω μου ἐπιλάλησεν, ἵνα σπαθέαν μὲ δώση·
καλὴν ραβδέαν ἔδωκα τὴν φάραν 'ς τὸ κεφάλιν
καὶ μὲ τὸν καβαλάρην της ἔπεσαν ἔμπροσθέν μου.
Καὶ ἐγὼ πάλι τὸν ἔλεγα ἂς σηκωθῇ, μὴ κεῖται:
«Ἐγείρου ἀπ' αὔτου, Κίνναμε· κειτόμενον οὐ κρῶ σου·
ἄμε περισωρεύθησε καί, ἂν θέλης, πάλιν ἔλα.»
Γοργὸν πάλιν σηκώνεται, πηδᾶ, καβαλικεύει
κ' ἐπῆρεν τὸ κοντάριν του, τρανὰ ἐπεγυρίστην
καὶ σύντομα ἐπιλάλησεν, τὴν κονταρέαν μὲ δώση·
καὶ τὸ κοντάριν του ἔριψα ἀπὸ τὴν φάραν κάτω
καὶ τὸν ἀγκώναν του ἥπλωσεν 'ς τὸν κάμπον ὡς σκουτέλιν.
Καὶ ἐγὼ ταῦτα τὸν ἔλεγα ἂς σηκωθῇ, μὴ κεῖται:
«Ἐγείρου ἀπ' αὔτου, Κίνναμε, κειτόμενον οὐ κρῶ σε.»
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν ὁ Φιλοπαππούς, κειτόμενος θαυμάζει:
«Εὐλόγησέν σου ὁ Θεός, νεώτερε, τὴν ἀνδρείαν·
ν' ἀξιωθῇς νὰ χαίρεσαι τὰ ἔτη τῆς ζωῆς σου·
καὶ ἂν οὐκ ἔναι εἰς λύπην σου καὶ οὐκ ἔναι πρὸς χολήν σου,
ὅρισε ὅτι νὰ ἔλθωμεν νὰ στέκωμεν μεδ' ἔσου
καὶ κεφαλὴν νὰ σ' ἔχωμεν εἰς ὅλα τὰ φουσάτα,
νὰ κάμωμεν ταξίδια ὅπου καὶ ἂν μᾶς ὁρίσης
καὶ σὺ νὰ μεταβάλλεσαι μετὰ τῆς ποθητῆς σου.»

καὶ εἰς τοὺς ἀπελάτας,

1273: Heavy irony: Giannakes is defeated at the first attempt.
1288: As in the traditional model of AR, Philopappous is left till last.
1294: A gloss.

I picked out Giannakes, to make trial of him;
and he was watching me, to give me a blow with his sword—
but I gave him a back-handed blow on the arm
and the sword fell from his hand and his hand hung limp;
and he was stretched out on his back, wonderful Giannakes.
And when Kinnamos saw this, he mounted and rode
and urged on his horse at me, to give me a blow with his sword.
I gave him a good blow with my club on his mare's head,
and with her rider she fell down before me.
And then I told him to get up and not to lie:
"Up, Kinnamos: I will not strike you as you lie there.
No, pull yourself together, and if you wish come at me again."
Then at once he got up and mounted and rode,
and took his lance and made a mighty turn,
and in no time urged on his horse, to give me a blow with his lance.
But I deflected his lance underneath the mare
and he smashed his elbow over the field like a clay pot.
And then I told him to get up and not to lie there:
"Up, Kinnamos: I will not strike you as you lie there."
And when Philopappous, as he lay there, saw this he marvelled:
"Youth, God hath blest your valour:
may you be found worthy to rejoice all the days of your life.
And if it is not a grievance to you and an annoyance to you,
decree that we should come and be with you,
and have you as head of all the army,
that we may journey wherever you decree,
and that you may travel around with the one of your desire."

1294 and among the raiders

1295–6: A patently insincere offer from a proverbial trickster: this is hardly good company for a girl. And it shows that the girl, though removed from the centre of the action, is still on Philopappous's mind.

Καὶ τότε τὸν ἐλάλησα κενοδοξούμενός τον:
«Ἐγείρου ἀπ' αὔτου, Φ'λοπαπποῦ, καὶ ὄνειρα μὴ βλέπης·
ἐγὼ μονογενὴς εἶμαι καὶ μόνος θέλω ὁδεύειν,
καὶ μόνην κόρην ἔλαβα καὶ τίποτα οὐ χρήζω.
Ποτέ μου οὐκ ἐσυνήθισα ἀνδραγαθεῖν μὲ ἄλλους.
Ἔπαρε τὰ φουσάτα σου καὶ τοὺς καλούς σου ἀγούρους
καὶ ὑπᾶτε κυνηγήσετε ὅπου εἶστε μαθημένοι
καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ τὸ κοράσιον μου νὰ εἴμεθεν ἀντάμα,
ὅτι οὓς ἔσμιξεν ὁ Θεὸς ἄνθρωποι οὐ χωρίζουν·
ὥστε ἔναι ὁ Θεὸς 'ς τοὺς οὐρανοὺς καὶ διακρατεῖ τὸν κόσμον,
ἄνθρωπος οὐ χωρίζει με ἀπὸ τῆς ποθητῆς μου.
Ἐδά, ἂν πάλι θέλετε νὰ δοκιμάσετέ με,
ὑπᾶτε καὶ σωρεύσετε ἀπείρους ἀπελάτες,
ὁποὺ οὔκ εἶδαν τὴν πεῖραν μου καὶ ἐμὲν οὐκ ἐγνωρίζουν,
καὶ ἐγὼ ὧδε νὰ σᾶς καρτερῶ καὶ νὰ σᾶς περιμένω
καὶ νὰ ἔχω καὶ τὰ ἄλογα καὶ τὰ ἄρματά μου ὅλα
καὶ τότε νὰ νοήσετε πῶς κρῶ καὶ καβαλάρης.»
Καὶ ἐπῆρεν ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς τὰ δύο παλληκάρια
καὶ ἐκεῖθεν ἐπηγαίνασιν ὅθεν καὶ ὅπου ἦλθαν.
Καὶ τότε ἀπεξέβηκαν ὡς ἀπὸ μίλιν ἕνα
καὶ οἱ τρεῖς ἀπομαζώχθησαν καὶ εἰς ἕναν τόπον στέκουν·
στέκουν καὶ διαλογίζουνται καὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους λέγουν:
«Πῶς ἐσυνέβην εἰς ἐμᾶς καὶ ἀτιμώθη ἡ ἀνδρεία μας;
Εἰς τὸν Ἀφράτην ποταμόν, κάτω εἰς τὸ Σαμουσάτο,
πέντε χιλιάδες ηὗραν μας καὶ οὐ κατεχώρισάν μας
καὶ πάλιν ἐκρατοῦμαν τους, κανεὶς οὐκ ἐντραλίσθην·

1299: The stress on aloneness as at RA 876; it may be that μονογενής here is a slip for καὶ μοναχός, rather than being any sort of pun on διγενής.

1303: 'Stick to hunting'; and Philopappous's lie of 1366ff in fact pretends this.

1310: Cf. 1216, and for this motif RA 926–7; the point reinforced by the pun on πεῖραν and ἀπείρους.

1316–7: They go off to make a plan; compare the deceitful Infantes of *Cid*

And then I said to him, mocking his pretensions:
"Up, Philopappous: do not dream.
I am an only son and I shall travel on my own,
and I have taken a maid on her own, and I want for nothing.
I have never been accustomed to do brave deeds with others.
Take your army and your fine lads
and go and hunt as you know how—
but my maid and I shall be together:
for those who have been joined by God will not be parted by men;
as long as God is in heaven and has power over the world,
no man shall part me from the one of my desire.
But if you wish to make trial of me again,
go and assemble inexperienced raiders
who have not had experience of me and do not know me;
and I shall keep watch for you here and await you.
And I shall have my horses and all my arms;
and then you shall see that I can deal blows on horseback too."
And Philopappous took the two braves,
and they set off for where they had come from.
And then they went about a mile away,
and the three of them gathered together and stood in one place;
they stood and discussed and said to one another:
"How did this happen to us, that our valour was dishonoured?
By the river Euphrates, down at Samosata,
five thousand came upon us and yet did not part us
—and then we held them off; none of us was scared.

2437–8.

1319: This formula about a come-uppance is reemployed for the new circumstances of RA 1018, this time stated by the general's wife. Here it looks forward to the even more pointed case of Maximou (1596–8).

1320: Ἀφράτης for Εὐφράτης through a popular etymology from ἀφρός, foam.

καὶ αὐτὸς ὡς ἦτον μοναχός, πεζὸς μὲ τὸ καλίκιν
καὶ μὲ τὸ μοναπλούτσικον, καὶ πῶς μᾶς εἶχεν τρέψειν; 1324
Οὗτος οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος ἀπὸ τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον· 1326
νὰ μὴ φοβᾶται τὰς πληγάς, νὰ μὴ φοβᾶται ξίφη!
Αὐτὸς καὶ γὰρ θηρίον ἔνι καὶ τὸν τόπον του βλέπει.»
Καὶ ὁ γέρων ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς πάλιν τὰ τέτοια λέγει:
«Αὐτὰ ὅλα τὰ λέγετε παρηγορίες μας εἶναι·
ἀμὴ εἶδα καλὸν νεώτερον, τὸν ὁ κόσμος οὐκ ἔχει,
νὰ μὴν τοῦ λείπη τίποτες, ἔν' περιγυρισμένος.
Τοῦτα ὁ Θεὸς τοῦ τὰ ἔδωκεν, ἔχει μεγίστην κάλλην
‹καὶ περισσὴν τὴν φρόνεσιν› καὶ ἀνδρείαν περισσοτέραν
καὶ τόλμην ὑπὲρ ἅπασαν καὶ γνώμην θηριώδην.
Καλόν μας τοῦτο ἐγίνετον . . .
ὅτι ἄνθρωποι οὐδὲν ἔτυχαν, νὰ στέκουν νὰ γελοῦσιν.
Καὶ τὸ ὄνομαν τὸ ἐλάβαμεν ἀπὸ τοὺς ἀπελάτας
σήμερον τὸ ἐχάσαμεν καὶ οὐ χρήζουσί μας ἄλλον.
'Αμὴ ἂν ἀκοῦτε λόγους μου καὶ ἐμπῆτε εἰς τὴν βουλήν μου,
μὴ τὸ καταφρονέσωμεν καὶ ἐπάρῃ το συνήθειον
καὶ οὐ μᾶς ἀφῇ ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν ποιεῖν ἀνδραγαθίας.
'Αμὴ ἂς ποίσωμεν καπνὸν νὰ ἔλθουν οἱ ἀπελάτες,
καπνὸν πολὺν ἂς ποίσωμεν καὶ ἂν ζοῦσι, νὰ ἐπανέλθουν·
ἴσως καὶ ἂν ἐκαυχήσατο, ἐκείνους οὐ μὴ ἐδεῖρεν.»
Καὶ εἰς τὸ βουνὶν ὑπήγασιν καὶ ἐποῖκαν τὸ σημάδιν
καὶ τρία μερόνυκτα ἥπτασιν, κανεὶς οὐδὲν ἐφάνη.
Καὶ τότε οἱ ἀπελάται οἱ δύο, Κίνναμος καὶ Γιαννάκης,
Φιλοπαπποὺν τὸν γέροντα οὕτως τὸν συντυχαίνουν:
«Πολλὰ μᾶς ἐδοκίμασες καὶ ἐπιλεκτοὺς μᾶς ηὗρες·
ἐφ' ὅσον ἔδειρεν ἐμᾶς, τοὺς ἄλλους τί γυρεύεις;

1326: The phrase is related to, but stronger than, the common formula τὸν ὁ κόσμος οὐκ ἔχει (e.g. 1331); Kinnamos and Giannakes take a more pessimistic view than Philopappous: that Akrites is supernatural.

1328: Rather like the ogre (1100ff) and the lion (1123); but rather closer to MG

But he, all alone as he was, on foot in boots,
1324 and with a single tunic—how could he turn us in flight?
1326 This is not a man of this world—
not to fear wounds, not to fear swords!
He is a monster that watches over its territory!"
And then old Philopappous spoke thus:
"Everything that you say is a consolation to us:
indeed I have seen a fine youth, such as there is not his like in all the world:
lacking in nothing and well set up.
These things God has given him: he has great beauty
and exceeding good sense and great valour
and daring above all men and the will of a wild beast.
It was a good thing for us that this happened
when no men were there to stand and laugh—
but the name we had among the raiders,
today we have lost it, and they will have no use for us now.
Now, if you will listen to my words and agree with my counsel,
—lest we think it of little account and he make a habit
of not letting us perform brave deeds henceforth—
now then, let us make smoke, for the raiders to come:
let us make plenty of smoke, and if they are still alive, let them come back.
Perhaps he was boasting: perhaps he did not give them a hiding."
And they went to the mountain and made the signal;
and three days and nights they lit fires and no-one appeared.
And then the two raiders, Kinnamos and Giannakes,
thus addressed old Philopappous:
"You have made trial of us often and found us to be the pick—
if he gave us a hiding, what can you expect of the others?

θεριό than to a regular wild beast.

1334: My supplement; cf. RA 725.

1350: I stress ἐπιλεκτούς (cf. 1436) for A's ἐπιλέκτους *metri causa*.

'Αμὴ ἄγωμε εἰς τὴν Μαξιμοὺ καὶ παρακάλεσέ την
καὶ ἄμποτε νὰ παρακληθῇ καὶ νὰ μᾶς ἐπακούσῃ·
καὶ ἐκείνη ἔχει πολὺν λαὸν καὶ νὰ μᾶς ἐπακούσῃ.
Καὶ νὰ τὸν παραπέσωμεν ἄγνωστα καὶ τὴν νύκταν
καὶ νὰ τονὲ παιδεύσωμεν καὶ οὐ μὴ μᾶς κόπτῃ ὁ πόνος.»
Καὶ τότε καὶ ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς πηδᾷ, καβαλικεύει,
μόνος τὴν στράταν ἔπιασεν, 'ς τὴν Μαξιμοὺν ὑπάγει.
Καὶ ὡς τὸν εἶδε ἡ Μαξιμού, πολλὰ τὸ ἐταράχθη·
τὸν Μιλιμίτσην ἔστειλεν καὶ προσυπήντησέ του:
«Καλῶς ἦλθες, Φιλοπαππού, γεράκιν μου μουτάτον!
Τὰ παλληκάρια ποῦ ἄφηκες, Γιαννάκην καὶ τὸν Λέον,
καὶ ἐσὺ πῶς ἦλθες μοναχός; Πολλὰ τὸ ἐταράχθην.
Ἔθλιψες τὴν καρδίαν μου καὶ ἐπαραπόνεσές με.»
Καὶ ὁ γέρων ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς ψευδεῖς λόγους τῆς εἶπεν:
«Εἰς τὰ βουνὰ ἐπερίτρεχα καὶ κορυφὰς ὀρέων
καὶ ἐθεώρουν τὰ κλαδία καὶ τὰς στενὰς κλεισούρας,
ἐθεώρουν καὶ τοὺς λέοντας ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ καλάμιν
καὶ τοὺς ἐλάφους ἔβλεπα ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ ἄλσος
καὶ ὀρδινιαζόμουν νὰ ἐμπῶ ἵνα τὰ πολεμήσω—
καὶ ἐσὺ ἐγνωρίζεις με καλὰ ὅτι ὀκνηρὸς οὐκ εἶμαι—
κ' ἔφθασαν οἱ ἀπελάτες μου, μηνύματα μὲ φέρνουν:
τὴν κόρην τὴν ἐφύλαγα λόγου τοῦ Γιαννακίου,
ὁ 'Ακρίτης τὴν ἀφήρπαξεν καὶ χαίρεται μετ' αὔτην
καὶ ηὗρε λιβάδια ἔνδροσα, ὡραῖα κατάσκια δένδρη
καὶ τὰ κυνήγια ὑπέρπλουτα ὡς ἤθελεν καὶ ἐπόθειν,
ἐλάφους τε καὶ συαγροὺς καὶ πέρδικας ὡραίας·

1352: Maximou will have been mentioned in the prologue, if it at all corresponded to the epilogue; the fact that her name (unlike e.g. Philopappous, Giannakes) has not survived in MG folk songs might indicate that she was not all that well known. Her ἀνδρεία does however leave an anonymous mark on the folk tradition with the MG songs about an ἀντρειωμένη λυγερή (Academy 1962: 3–4).

1354: With Trapp I read this for E καὶ ἐκείνη λαὸν πολύν ἔχει, which makes λαόν an awkward monosyllable.

Now then, let us go to Maximou, and you plead with her;
and with any luck she will hear our plea and heed us;
for she has a large company—and may she heed us!
And let us fall on him unawares, at night,
and give him a lesson that this pain not gash us."
And then Philopappous mounted and rode
and took to the road alone and went to Maximou.
And when Maximou saw him, she was greatly disturbed;
she sent Milimitses to meet him:
"Welcome, Philopappous, my moulted hawk!
The braves, Giannakes and Leos, where have you left them?
And how is it that you have come alone? I am greatly disturbed at this:
you have afflicted my heart and made me unhappy."
And to her old Philopappous spoke false words:
"I was running over the hills and the mountain peaks,
and watching the branches and the narrow passes,
and watching the lions in the reedbeds
and seeing the deer in the grove,
and making ready to go in there and do battle with them
—and you know me well, that I am not idle—
and my raiders arrived, bringing me messages.
The maid that I was saving for Giannakes,
Akrites has carried her off and rejoices with her,
and has found dewy meadows, lovely shady trees,
and hunting in abundance, as he wished and desired:
deer and wild boar and lovely partridges—

1356: In the colloquial language παιδεύσωμεν means to beat; but the youth of Akrites makes an etymological pun out of it, rather as at ARM 195 but inverted.

1360ff: The narration is compressed: Maximou sends her right-hand man Milimitses (who will have been mentioned in the prologue as in the epilogue) to address Philopappous; Philopappous goes to Maximou; and he answers her question to her face.

1361: For the term of address cf. LE 335.

καταφιλεῖ τὴν λυγερὴν καὶ χαίρεται μετ' αὔτην.
Καὶ ἂν θέλης, θεραπεύσωμεν Γιαννάκην καὶ τὸν Λέον,
τὸν Κίνναμον τὸν θαυμαστόν, κ' ἐμὲν τὸν σὸν ἱκέτην.
Κόπιασε, αὐθέντρια καὶ κυρά, καὶ ἂς ποίσωμεν δουλείαν
καὶ ἂς θαραπαοῦμεν καὶ ἡμεῖς διὰ τὴν σὴν ἀγάπην,
ὅτι οὐκ ἐπερηφάνευσες κοπιάσειν εἰς δουλείαν.»
Καὶ ὡς τὸ ἤκουσεν ἡ Μαξιμού, φωνὴν μεγάλην σύρνει:
«Φιλοπαππού, γνωρίζεις με παρὰ τοὺς ἄλλους πλέον
καὶ ἐν ἀκριβείᾳ νὰ τὸ εἰπῇς τὸ πῶς μὲ ἐγνωρίζεις,
ὅτι ὅπου καὶ ἂν εὑρέθημαν, ἐμέναν προσκαλοῦνται·
πολέμους γὰρ καὶ ἀπειλὰς καὶ θορυβὰς μεγάλας
ἡ Μαξιμοὺ οὐ φοβεῖται τους, πάντες ἂς τὸ γινώσκουν,
καὶ ἐδάρτε ἐσύ, Φιλοπαππού, θέλεις μὲ κοπιάσειν;
'Απέλθω θέλω καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ νὰ τὸν δοκιμάσω
καὶ νὰ τὸν κοπανίσωμεν, νὰ ἐπάρωμεν τὴν κόρην.
Νὰ ἔλθω μὲ τοὺς ἀγούρους μου καὶ ὅλα μου τὰ φουσάτα
καὶ ἂν οὐ τὸν εὕρωμεν ἐκεῖ, ἔδε ἀνομία μεγάλη!
Νὰ σοῦ ὑπακούσω, γέροντα, καὶ νὰ ἔλθω μετὰ σένα:
μά τὴν ἀνδρείαν τὴν περισσήν, τὴν ὁ Θεὸς μοῦ ἐδῶκεν,
'ς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ ἂν ἀνεβῇ, εἰς τὰ νέφη καὶ ἂν δράμη,
'ς τὴν θάλασσαν καὶ ἂν περπατῇ, ἡ κόρη οὐκ ἐξεγλεῖ μου.»
Τὸν Μιλιμίτσην ἔκραξεν, βουλεύεται μετ' αὔτον:
«'Ο γέρων ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς πάλιν κυνήγια ἔχει
καὶ κράζει μας νὰ ἀπέλθωμεν καὶ ἐμεῖς ‹ὁμοῦ› μὲ αὐτοῦνον
καὶ ὑπάγετε σωρεύσετε χιλίους ἀπελάτας

1390–2: A pun: the reward for κοπιάσειν will be the chance νὰ κοπανίσωμεν Akrites.

1393: I read with A note (cf. 1302) instead of the unmetrical Νὰ κοπιάσω καὶ τοὺς καβαλάρους μου καὶ ὅλα μου τὰ φουσάτα: the verb has stuck in the scribe's mind, and he is often careless of synonyms.

1396: ἀνδρεία always emphasizing Maximou's unnatural masculine prowess;

he kisses the lissom girl passionately and rejoices with her.
But if you wish, let us help Giannakes and Leos,
the wonderful Kinnamos—and myself your suppliant.
Come, lady mistress, and let us set to work;
and let us find help in the love you show us—
for you have not been too proud to set to work."
And when Maximou heard this, she raised a great cry:
"Philopappous, you know me better than others,
and you may in truth say that you know me,
that wherever I am they call on me.
For battles and threats and great tumult,
Maximou fears them not—let all men know it!
But now, you, Philopappous, want me to come?
I shall set off to make trial of him myself;
and for us to batter him and take the maid.
Let me take my horsemen and my whole army;
and if I do not find him there, what a bad business it will be!
Let me heed you, old man, and come with you:
by the exceeding valour which God hath given me,
if he ascend to the heavens, if he run on the clouds,
if he walk on the sea—the maid will not escape my clutches!"
She called for Milimitses and took counsel with him:
"Old man Philopappous is having another hunt,
and he calls us to go off with him too.
But go and gather a thousand raiders,

God has given it her but Akrites will take it away (1596). The oath μά...(with A note for E μέ) makes this all the more pointed: her valour is not a firm thing to swear by.

1398: The preoccupation is with the girl, the quarry: Akrites is implicitly despised as a mere obstacle.

1400: In a sense true: for the joke see RA 809 (Ricks 1989b).

καὶ ἀπ' τοὺς χιλίους μοῦ χώρισε κἂν ἑκατὸν ἀγούρους
καὶ ἂς ἔχουν ἄρματα καλά, ἱππάρια ἀφιρωμένα,
καὶ ἂς εἶναι περιγυριστοί, νὰ κροῦν καλὰς ραβδέας
καὶ κονταρέας ἔμνοστας, σπαθέας αἱματωμένας
καὶ αὐτὸν νὰ καταλάχωμεν, τὸν ἄγουρον τὸν λέγουν,
νὰ τόνε κοπανίσωμεν, νὰ ἐπάρωμεν τὴν κόρην.»
Καὶ ὁ Μιλιμίτσης ἔποικεν ὡς ἐπαρακελεύθη
καὶ ἐπῆρέ τους ἡ Μαξιμοὺ καὶ ἔρχεται εἰς ἐμέναν.
Καὶ ἀπέτις ἀπεξέβηκαν κανέναν μίλι, δύο,
εὐθὺς οἱ ἀπελάτες της, Κίνναμος καὶ Γιαννάκης,
ἐπῆραν τὸ στρατὶν στρατὶν καὶ προσυπήντησάν της:
«Καλῶς ἤρθες, κυρία μου, αὐθέντρια εὐγενεστάτη·
ὁ Θεὸς ἐσέναν ἔπεψεν, ἀνδρεία τῶν ἀπελάτων.»
Τότε στραφεῖσα ἡ Μαξιμοὺ τοὺς ἀπελάτας λέγει:
«Καλῶς τὰ παλληκάρια μου, Γιαννάκην καὶ τὸν Λέον·
διατί ἐπαροκνήσατε καὶ οὐκ ἤλθατε εἰς ἐμέναν;
Ἐγὼ ὡς γυναίκα εἶμαι, ἀλλὰ οὐκ ὄκνησα τοῦ νὰ ἔλθω·
ἀπέλθω ἔχω καὶ ἐγὼ καὶ νὰ σᾶς θαραπεύσω.»
Καὶ ἐγὼ πάντα εἶχα τὸν σκοπὸν καὶ πάντα ἀπάντεχά τους·
ὁρίζω τοὺς ἀγούρους μου καὶ φέρνουν μου φαρία,
τέσσερα φέρνουν φοβερὰ πουλάρια ἐκ τῶν φαρίων
καὶ ἦσαν καὶ τὰ τέσσερα ρωμαίκα κουρεμένα.
Καὶ τὰ τέσσερα ὑπόστρωσα καὶ ὑποχαλίνωσά τα
καὶ ἔμπροσθεν εἰς τὴν τέντα μου βόσκουν εἰς τὸ λιβάδιν
καὶ ἐστάθην ἐγὼ κ' ἔβλεπα τὸ πότε θέλουν ἔλθει.
Καὶ κτύπον ἤκουσα πολύν, μέγαν τῶν σκουταρίων
καὶ εἰς τὴν ψυχήν μου ἔλεγα: «Αὐτοί 'ναι καὶ ἀποσώνουν.»
Καὶ βλέπω τὸν Φιλοπαππού μετὰ τὸν Μιλιμίτσην

1413: στρατὶν στρατίν: the repetition is a real piece of demotic MG idiom.

1422: The only appearance of Akrites' lads in this poem, which is on the face of it mystifying (cf. Maximou's words of 1521). We may account for it in three ways: (i) A slip: the poet uses the wrong formula. This is just possible, but the narrative is generally a well-organized one; (ii) A scribal error: the words τοὺς

and out of them pick for me some hundred lads;
and let them have fine arms and armoured horses;
and let them be fully armed, strikers of good club-blows
and fine lance-blows and bloody sword-blows.
And if we catch him opportunely, the lad of whom they speak,
let us batter him and take the maid."
And Milimitses did as he was bade,
and Maximou took them and came to me.
And when they were at a mile or two's distance,
at once her raiders, Kinnamos and Giannakes,
took to the road and met her:
"Welcome to my lady, my noble mistress:
God has sent you, valour of the raiders."
Then Maximou turned and said to the raiders:
"Greetings to my braves Giannakes and Leos—
why were you idle and did not come to me?
I am a woman, but I did not shrink from coming:
I will go out and give you help."
And I kept constant watch for them and constantly awaited them.
I ordered my lads to bring me steeds:
they brought four fearsome foals from among the steeds,
the four cropped in the Roman fashion.
And I saddled and bridled the four,
and they grazed in the meadow in front of my tent;
and I stood and watched for when the others would come.
And I heard a loud din of shields,
and I said in my heart: "It is them, and they are upon me."
And I saw Philopappous with Milimitses,

ἀγούρους have slipped in for a phrase for the girl, who carries out her role of 1171, 1196, 1263ff—in effect, a squire. This would account for the MS singular φέρνη; (iii) Saving the text with a subtlety, we might argue that, though the narrator had his lads with him, they would certainly have taken flight from the fighting (RDA 1721–49, esp. 1735ff).

καὶ ἀκούω καὶ λέγουσι ὡς δι' ἐμὲν ἀπρεπεστάτους λόγους:
«Ἐδῶ ἂς τὸν γυρεύσωμεν, ὁποὺ τὴν κόρην ἔχει,
καὶ ἂς τὸν περιπέσωμεν, 's τὴν μέσην του νὰ ὑπᾶμεν,
πρὶν τὸ νοήση ὁ νεώτερος καὶ ἐπάρῃ τ' ἄρματά του.»
Καὶ ἐστράφην ὁ πρωτοληστής, τὸν γέροντα ὑβρίζει:
«Εἰς ἑκατὸν ἐπιλεκτοὺς ποτὲ οὐκ ἐφοβήθην
καὶ ἐδάρτε εἰς ἕναν μοναχὸν θέλω στέκειν νὰ ἐβλέπω;
Καὶ μετὰ ποῖον πρόσωπον τὴν Μαξιμοὺ νὰ ἰδοῦμεν;»
Καὶ ἀγνώστως εἶδα γαληνὰ καὶ ἔρχουνταν πρὸς ἐμέναν.
Πηδῶ κ' ἐκαβαλίκευσα τὴν θαυμαστὴν τὴν φάραν
καὶ ὀλίγον ἀπεξέβηκα καὶ ἐστάθην νὰ μὲ δοῦσιν
καὶ τὸ ἰδεῖν με ὁ Φ'λοπαπποὺς παραμερέαν ἐστάθην,
ὅτι καλὰ ἐγνώριζεν τὸ πῶς τὸν θαραπεύω.
Καὶ ὁ Μιλιμίτσης ὁ ληστὴς ἀπάνω μου ἐκατέβην·
κοντάριν ἐμαλάκιζεν, τὴν κονταρέαν μὲ δώσῃ,
καὶ τὸ κοντάριν του ἔριψα καὶ ἐδῶσα του ραβδέαν,
μάθε καὶ πὼς τὸν ἔδωσα εἰς τὰς δισσουμέας ἀπάνω
καὶ σύσσελον τὸν ἔριψα ἀπὸ τὴν φάραν κάτω.
Καὶ ἐγὼ ἤλπιζα νὰ σηκωθῇ, νὰ ἔλθῃ πρὸς ἐμέναν
. . . κ' εἶχα τὸν νοῦν μου εἰς αὖτον.
Καὶ ὁ γέρων ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς ἀπὸ πλαγίου μου ἦλθεν
καὶ κονταρέαν μὲ ἔδωκεν τὴν φάραν 's τὰ μηρία
καὶ ἐπεσφίκτηκεν πολλὰ καὶ ἐλάκτισεν μεγάλως
καὶ εὐθὺς ἐκοντογύρισα καὶ βλέπω τον καὶ φεύγει
καὶ τότε τὸν ἐλάλησα φωνὴν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν:
«'Ανάμενέ με, Φ'λοπαππού, οὐδ' ἐντρέπεσαι νὰ φεύγῃς;
'Ανάμενε καὶ ἂς δώσωμεν, χαρῇς, καὶ ἂς δευτερώσῃς,
ὅτι ἔβλεπά σε ταπεινὸν καὶ ὡσὰν ὑποθλιμμένον
καὶ ἐδὰ βλέπω ἐπλανέθηκα, Φιλοπαππού μου, γέρον,
καὶ ἐδὰ βλέπω ἐλυσσίασες καὶ ἐκρυφοδάκησές με.»
Καὶ ἐγὼ γοργὸν ἐγύρισα καὶ ἐφόρεσα λουρίκιν,

1450: I read αὖτον (so G 6.508) for E αὔτους: the hero did not have the foresight to watch out for the others but had his mind fixed on Milimitses—and was then nearly surprised by the tricky Philopappous.

and I heard them saying most unfitting words about me:
"Let us seek him out here, the one with the maid,
and let us fall on him and go right at him
before the youth sees and takes up arms."
And the chief robber turned and cursed the old man:
"Faced by a hundred picked men I never showed fear—
and now, faced with one man on his own am I going to stand and stare?
With what face will we be able to look on Maximou?"
But without their knowing it, I was calmly watching as they came towards me:
I mounted and rode the wonderful mare,
and went off a short distance and waited for them to see me.
But when he saw me, Philopappous kept his distance,
for he well knew what treatment he would get at my hands.
But the robber Milimitses came down at me:
he was brandishing a lance, to give me a lance-blow;
but I dashed his lance aside and gave him a club-blow,
and I tell you that I gave him a blow on his two shoulders
and hurled him, saddle and all, down from the mare.
And I was hoping for him to get up, to come at me;
but I had my mind on that other one.
And old Philopappous came at me from the side
and gave me a lance-blow on the mare's thighs,
and it tightened up in pain and kicked wildly—
and at once I turned and saw him in flight.
And then I shouted to him from afar:
"Wait for me Philopappous—are you not ashamed to flee?
Wait, and let us strike—good luck to you—and have another go.
For I saw you humbled and afflicted;
but now I see I was misled, old man Philopappous,
and now I see that you have turned rabid and bite me unawares."
And I turned swiftly and put on a breastplate;

βιατάριν ἔβαλα τερπνόν, καθάριον μαγδαΐτην,
πράσινον ἀραβίτικον ἀπάνω εἰς τὸ λουρίκιν·
οἱ ρίζες ἦσαν πιθαμή, ὁλόχρυσα λεοντάρια,
καὶ τὰ κομπιὰ ὁλοχύμευτα, μὲ τὸ μαργαριτάριν.
Καὶ ἐστράφηκα καὶ εἶδα τους ὅλους ἀπὸ μακρόθεν
καὶ ἔρχουντα καὶ ἤβλεπαν, ὡς καὶ τὸ δίκαιον εἶχαν,
καὶ τὰ κοντάρια ἐχύνασιν καὶ ἤρχοντα πρὸς ἐμέναν.
Καὶ ἐγὼ γοργὸν ἐπήδησα καὶ ἐπῆρα μίαν σέλαν·
στρώνω πουλάριν θαυμαστόν, πουλάριν κουρεμένον,
ρωμαϊκόν, πανώραιον, ἦτον καὶ τετραέτης,
κ' ἔστρωσα καὶ ἐχαλίνωσα καὶ ἐκαβαλίκευσά το
καὶ τὴν καλήν μου ἐλάλησα παραγγελίαν τοιαύτην:
τὸν τόπον νὰ παρεδιαβῆ, νὰ κατεβῆ ὀλίγον,
νὰ βλέπη, νὰ στοχάζεται τὸ τί τοὺς θέλω κάμει
καὶ λόγον τὴν ἐλάλησα, παραγγελίαν τοιαύτην:
«Καλή μου καὶ πανθαύμαστη, τὸ ἄνθος τῶν Ἐρώτων,
κἂν ὅσοι μὲ ἀποπέφτουσι, βλέπε νὰ μὴ φωνιάξης
καὶ ἀκούσω τὴν φωνίτσα σου καὶ σκοτιστῶ εἰς ἐσέναν
καὶ λάθη με καὶ δώσουν με σπαθέαν ἢ ραβδέαν
καὶ πάρη τους ἡ ὄρεξι καὶ ἔλθουν πρὸς ἐσέναν.»
Καὶ ἐγὼ . . . ἐστάθην εἰς λιθάριν
κ' ἔμπηξα τὸ κοντάριν μου καὶ ἐστάθηκα κ' ἐθεώρουν
τὸ πότε νὰ ἔλθουν εἰς ἐμὲν Κίνναμος καὶ Γιαννάκης.
Καὶ σὺν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἡ Μαξιμοὺ κ' ἦτον καὶ γαυριασμένη·
φαρὶν ἐκαβαλίκευσε, πολλὰ ἦτον ὡραῖον:
ἡ χύτη καὶ τὸ οὐράδιν του μὲ τὴν χινέα βαμμένα,
τὰ τέσσερά του ὀνύχια ἀσήμιν τσαπωμένα,
τὸ χαλινάριν της πλεκτὸν μὲ τὰ χρυσὰ λιλούδια.
Καὶ ἡ φορεσία της θαυμαστὴ ἦτον, παραλλαγμένη:
λουρίκιν ἀργυρὸν φορεῖ, διὰ λίθων πολυτίμων,
καὶ τὸ κασίδι χυμευτὸν ἦτον, παραλλαγμένον,
μὲ τὰ χρυσὰ μετώπια, μὲ τοὺς χρυσοὺς τοὺς κόμπους·

1473: We have almost forgotten the girl since 1266; but she is the source of the contention, and the poet wants to introduce a parting scene which hints at the

put on a lovely shirt, of pure Baghdad material,
a green Arabian shirt, over the breastplate:
the hem was a cubit long, with gold lions on it,
and the buttons were enamelled with pearls.
And I turned and saw all of them at a distance,
and they were coming and watching out, as was quite right;
and they pulled out their lances and came at me.
And swiftly I bounded and took a saddle:
I saddled a wonderful foal, a cropped foal,
a handsome Roman one, four years old.
I saddled and bridled and rode it;
and I gave my loved one these instructions:
to go away from the spot, to go down a little,
to watch and reflect on what I should do to them;
and I spoke to her with these instructions:
"My wonderful loved one, flower of the Loves,
however many fall on me, make sure not to cry out,
lest I hear your little voice and be concerned for you,
and fail to notice them dealing me a blow with sword or club—
or lest they be possessed by desire and come after you."
And I stood on a stone
and stuck my lance in the ground and stood and watched
for when Kinnamos and Giannakes would come at me.
And with them was Maximou, and she was exultant.
She rode a steed, a handsome one:
its mane and tail were dyed with henna,
its four hooves covered with silver,
its bridle twined with golden flowers.
And her garb too was wonderful and rare:
she wore a silver breastplate with precious stones;
and her helmet was enamelled and rare,
with golden headpieces with ties of gold;

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hero's frailty in the face of love (1479).

1485: γαυριασμένη also means 'in heat'.

τουβία ὀξυκάστορα μὲ τὸ μαργαριτάριν
καὶ τὰ ποδηματίτσια της χρυσὰ διακεντισμένα,
τὰ καύκαλα ἦσαν χυμευτὰ καὶ οἱ πτέρνες μὲ τοὺς λίθους.
Πέντε τὴν ἐπαρέτρεχον ἀπ' ὧδε καὶ ἀπ' ἐκεῖθεν
καὶ ἐκ τὰ ἱππάρια τοὺς ἐγνώρισα καὶ ἐκ τῆς φορεσίας:
ἦτον ‹καὶ› γὰρ ὁ Φ'λοπαππούς, Κίνναμος καὶ Γιαννάκης
καὶ ὁ θαυμαστὸς ὁ Λίανδρος μετὰ τὸν Μιλιμίτσην.
Καὶ ὅταν ‹ὅλοι› ἐσίμωσαν τοῦ ποταμοῦ τὸ χεῖλος,
τότε στραφεῖσα ἡ Μαξιμοὺ τὸν γέρονταν ἐλάλει:
«Ποῦ εἶναι τὰ φουσάτα του τὰ θέλω πολεμήσει
καὶ ποῦ εἶναι οἱ καβαλάροι του, ποῦ 'ναι οἱ ἀνδρειωμένοι
. . . τοὺς θέλω πολεμήσει;»
Καὶ ὁ γέρων ὁ Φιλοπαπποὺς τὴν Μαξιμοὺν ἐλάλει:
«Θωρεῖς αὐτὸν τὸν ἄγουρον ποὺ στέκει εἰς τὸ λιθάριν
κ' ἔστησεν τὸ κοντάριν του καὶ ἀπάνου του ἀκουμπίζει;
'Εκδέχεται νὰ ὑπάγωμεν ὅλοι ἀπάνου εἰς αὖτον,
κἂν τάχα μοναχὸς ἐστὶν ἐμᾶς οὐδὲν φοβᾶται.
"Αν εὕρῃ τόπον νὰ ἐμπῇ εἰς τὸν λαόν μας μέσα,
ὥσπερ πετρίτης ἄχρωμος, ὅταν ἐμπῇ εἰς κυνήγιν,
καὶ χύσῃ τὸ πτερούγιν του καὶ τὰ ὄρνεα ἀποκτείνῃ,
οὕτως ἐμᾶς ἂν γυριστῇ, τινὰς νὰ μὴ τὸν δώσῃ.
'Αλλ' ἂς προκαρτερέψωμεν καὶ τότε ἂς τὸν ἴδοῦμε
καὶ νὰ τὸν περιφέρωμε, καὶ οὐ μὴ καβαλικεύσῃ·
εἰ δὲ καθίσῃ εἰς ἄλογον, ἀπιλογίαν μᾶς κάμνει.»
Καὶ τότε ἡ κούρβα ἡ Μαξιμοὺ τὸν γέροντα ἀτιμάζει:
«"Εβγα ἀπ' ἐδῶ, λυσσόγερε, υἱὲ τῆς ἀπωλείας·
ὡς καὶ ἀπ' τὰ γέρα τὰ πολλὰ ὁ κῶλος σου
ἐτσιγκρίασε.

1498: The verse is unmetrical; Trapp deletes τούς, but the result appears to be impossible Greek.

1518: κούρβα a rare judgement by the narrator (but see e.g. 1467),

her gaiters were of mauve beaver with pearl
and her dainty shoes sewn with gold,
and the uppers and heels studded with stones.
Five men ran beside her on this side and that,
and from their horses and garb I recognized them:
for there were Philopappous, Kinnamos and Giannakes,
and wonderful Liandros with Milimitses.
And when they all approached the edge of the river,
then Maximou turned and said to the old man:
"Where is his army with which I am to do battle?
And where are his horsemen, where the valiant men
with whom I am to do battle?"
And old man Philopappous said to Maximou:
"You see that lad standing on a stone,
who has stood his lance and is leaning on it?
He is waiting for all of us to go against him;
and though he is alone he is has no fear of us.
If he finds space to go among our throng,
just like a light-coloured falcon when it hunts,
and spreads its wing and kills the birds,
so will it be with him—if he turns among us, no-one will get in a blow at him.
But let us lie in wait, and then let us spy him,
and surround him so that he cannot ride—
but if he gets on a horse he will make a laughing-stock of us all."
And then the strumpet Maximou spoke to the old man with words of insult:
"Away, rabid old man, son of destruction!
Even your cock has shrivelled up with old age!

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foreshadowing its justified use at 1577.
1519ff: Cf. Akrites' insult at 1460 and Milimitses' expostulations at 1435ff.

Ἐγὼ ἔλεγα φουσάτα ἐχει καὶ ἀγούρους ἀνδρειωμένους
καὶ ἐπῆρα τὰ φουσάτα μου καὶ ἦλθα νὰ πολεμήσω.
Ἐγὼ μόνη καὶ μοναχὴ νὰ κατεβῶ εἰς αὖτον,
νὰ κόψω τὸ κεφάλιν του καὶ ἐδῶ νὰ σᾶς τὸ φέρω,
νὰ ἐπάρω τὸ κοράσιον καὶ ἐδῶ νὰ σᾶς τὸ φέρω
νὰ ἐπάρω τὴν πεθύμιαν σας καὶ ἐδῶ νὰ σᾶς τὴν φέρω
. . . καὶ ἐσεῖς μὴ κουρασθῆτε.»
Καὶ σύντομα ἐπιλάλησεν, τὸν ποταμὸν περάση,
καὶ ἐγὼ δὲ τὴν ἐλάλησα φωνὴν ἀπὸ μακρόθεν:
«Αὐτόθε στέκου, Μαξιμού, ὧδε μηδὲν περάσης!
Τοὺς ἄνδρας πρέπει νὰ περνοῦν, ἀμὴ ὄχι τὰς γυναῖκας.
Περάσειν ἔχω, Μαξιμού, ὡς διὰ σέναν τὸ ποτάμιν
καὶ νὰ σοῦ ἀντιμέψωμεν, ὡς καὶ τὸ δίκαιον ἔχεις.»
Τὸν γρίβαν μου ἐπιλάλησα, τὸν ποταμὸν περάση,
καὶ εἶχεν νερὸν ὁ ποταμὸς πολὺν καὶ βουρκωμένον
καὶ ἐξέπεσεν ὁ γρίβας μου καὶ ἐχώθην ἕως τραχήλου·
καὶ δένδρον ἔπεψεν ὁ Θεὸς ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ ποτάμιν
καὶ ἂν εἶχεν λείπειν τὸ δενδρόν, ἐπνίγετον ὁ Ἀκρίτης.
Καὶ ὡς εἶδεν τοῦτο ἡ Μαξιμού, ἀπάνω μου ἐκατέβη·
κοντάριν ἐμαλάκιζεν, τὴν κονταρέαν μὲ δώση·
καὶ ταῦτα τὸ κοντάριν της ἔριψα παρὰ μίαν
καὶ σύντομα ἔριψα ραβδίν, τὴν Μαξιμοὺν ἐλάλουν:
«Ἐλεῶ τὰ κάλλη σου, κυρά, βλέπε μὴ κινδυνεύσης·
ἀλλὰ ἂς δώσω, ‹Μαξιμού›, τὴν φάραν σου ραβδέαν
καὶ ἐκ τὴν ραβδέαν, Μαξιμού, νόησε μὲ τίναν ἔχεις.»
Καὶ ἐγὼ ραβδέαν ἔδωσα τὴν φάραν 'ς τὰς κουτάλας
καὶ ἀνάσκελα ἐξήπλωσεν ἡ θαυμαστὴ ἡ φάρα.
Καὶ τότε πάλι ἡ Μαξιμοὺ οὕτως μὲ παρεκάλει:
«Κύρκα, φοβήσου τὸν Θεὸν καὶ ἀπὲ συμπάθησέ μου
καὶ ἂς φέρουν πάλιν ἄλογον, διὰ νὰ κάτσω ἀπάνω
καὶ νὰ νοήσης, ἄγουρε, καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνδρείαν.»

1523: Maximou is using what we might call Akrites' own formula (RA 876)—a hint that she will fail.

I thought he had an army and valiant lads,
and I took my army and came to do battle.
I alone and all on my own will go at him
to cut off his head and bring it to you here;
to take the maid and bring her to you here;
to take the one of your desire and bring her to you here.—
As for you, don't get tired!"
And at once she urged on her horse to cross the river,
and I called to her from a distance:
"Stay there, Maximou: do not cross over here!
It is for men to cross, not—I declare—for women.
I can cross the river for you, Maximou—
and give you your due, as you deserve."
I urged on my grey horse to cross the river;
but the river's waters were full and turbulent,
and my grey horse stumbled and sank in up to its neck.
But God sent a tree in the river—
and if the tree had not been there, Akrites would have drowned.
And when Maximou saw this, she came down at me:
she was brandishing a lance to give me a lance-blow.
But then at once I dashed her lance aside
and quickly hurled my club to one side and spoke to Maximou:
"I take pity on your beauty, lady: be sure not to run into danger.
But let me give your mare a blow with my club, Maximou;
and from the club-blow, Maximou, see with whom you have to deal."
And I gave the mare a club-blow on its haunches,
and the wonderful mare was stretched out on its back.
And then in turn Maximou pleaded with me as follows:
"Young sir, have fear of God and so forgive me—
but let them bring in turn a horse for me to sit on,
and you shall see my valour too, lad."

1524–5: The trophy formula of AR 664, 667.
1535–8: A traditional motif which we find in ARM 41–53.

Καὶ ἐγὼ αὐτὴν παραχωρῶ ἵνα καβαλικεύσῃ
καὶ ἂν ἔνι ἡ γεῦσις ἔμνοστος, πάλι νὰ δευτερώσῃ.
Τὸν Λίανδρον ἐφώνιαξεν καὶ φέρνει της ἱππάριν,
πηδᾶ κ' ἐκαβαλίκευσε καὶ παίρνει καὶ κοντάριν
καὶ ἀπὸ μακρέα μ' ἐφώναζε: «Ἐδὰ σὲ βλέπω, Ἀκρίτη!»
Καὶ τὸ κοντάρι ἐμάκρυνε, τὴν κονταρέαν μὲ δώσῃ.
Σπαθέαν τῆς φάρας ἔδωκα ἀπάνω εἰς τὸ κεφάλιν·
τὰ δύο μέρη ἐσχίσθησαν κ' ἔπεσαν παρὰ μίαν,
ἦτον καὶ ἡ σέλα πάντερπνος, ὅλη κατεζουλίστην,
καὶ ἀπέμεινεν ἡ Μαξιμού, πεζή, ἐλεεινὴ εἰς τὸν κάμπον.
Τὸ ὑπόδημά μου ἐφίλησεν καὶ οὕτως μὲ παρεκάλει:
«Κύρκα, φοβήσου τὸν Θεόν, πάλιν συμπάθησέ με
. . . εἰς τὴν μωρίαν τούτην·
παρὰ σαλῶν καὶ ἄτακτων ἀνθρώπων ἐδιδάχθην
καὶ ἐσὺ μόνος μὲ κέρδισες καὶ ἄλλος μὴ μὲ κερδίσῃ.»
Καὶ τότε ἐγὼ τὴν Μαξιμοὺ οὕτως ἀπιλογήθην:
«Μά τὸν Θεόν, ἡ Μαξιμού, οὐκ ἔν' τὸ ἐνθύμημά σου·
ἡ κόρη τὴν ἐγὼ φιλῶ τῶν εὐγενῶν ὑπάρχει·
ἔχει γὰρ πλοῦτος ἄπειρον καὶ συγγενοὺς ἐνδόξους
καὶ ἀδέλφια πολυορεκτικὰ καὶ ἀδελφοὺς πλουσίους·
καὶ πάντας ἐξηρνήσατο καὶ μετὰ μέναν ἦλθεν
καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ πάντων δυνατὸς αὐτὸς νὰ μᾶς χωρίσῃ.
Εἰδὲ ἂν ὁρμῇς νὰ πορνευθῇς, ἐγὼ νὰ σοῦ τὸ ποίσω.»
Καὶ ἐπέζευσα τὸν μαῦρον μου καὶ λύω τ' ἄρματά μου
καὶ τὸ ἐπεθύμα ἡ Μαξιμοὺ γοργὸν τῆς τὸ ἐποῖκα·

1560: At once a sensible regard for material things and a way of expressing Maximou's destruction: πάντερπνος can be used of a girl (e.g. RA 889).

1561: A marked resemblance to a verse in MG folk song, e.g. in 'The Dead Brother' (Ioannou 1983: 36): κι ἔμεινε ἡ μάνα μοναχὴ σὰν καλαμιὰ στὸν κάμπο ('and the mother was left all alone like stubble on the plain'). Does such an expression predate this passage with its very different sort of woman? But κάμπο at the end of a verse (see '*campo*' in the *Cid passim*) means the field of battle specifically.

1565: I omit an initial ὅτι, a filler which makes the line unmetrical.

1566: I prefer this to A's imperative κέρδισε; the sense being at once MG 'you

And I granted her wish to ride
and, if it were her fancy, to have another go at me.
She called Liandros and he brought her a second horse;
she mounted and rode and took a lance
and called to me from a distance: 'Here you are, Akrites!"
And she thrust the lance forward to give a lance-blow.
I gave the mare a blow on the head:
the two parts were riven asunder and at once fell to the ground;
and the saddle which was lovely was all wrecked;
and Maximou was left on foot, pitiful on the field.
She kissed my shoe and pleaded with me thus:
"Young sir, have fear of God and forgive me
for this foolishness,
for I was instructed by witless and unruly men,
and you alone have vanquished me, and may no other vanquish me."
And then I addressed Maximou thus:
"By God, Maximou, your wish will not stand:
for the maid I love is of a noble family;
for she has boundless wealth and glorious kin
and desirable sisters and wealthy brothers;
and all of them she renounced to come with me—
and Almighty God, may it be He who parts us.
But if you are bent on fornication, then I shall do it to you."
And I tied up my black horse and took off my armour;
and what Maximou desired I quickly did to her.

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have defeated me' (G 6.769: ἐνίκησας) and 'you have won me'.

1571: I take ἀδέλφια exclusively as sisters, though if taken to the letter this breaks a parallelism with the plot of LE.

1575: Inconsistent with 1536: either a misused formula (μαῦρος so often used for 'horse'); or Akrites, like Maximou (1554), has replaced the horse.

1576: Swiftly, not at leisure as with his own girl (1374–8); it still seems like a long time to the girl (1586), but the fact that it isn't is presumably one reason why she is not overcome with jealousy. At any rate, we are some way from LE (478–9) and RA (900).

καὶ ἀπείτις τὸ ἔκαμα ἐγὼ τῆς Μαξιμοῦς τῆς κούρβας,
εὐθὺς ἐκαβαλίκευσα καὶ ἐπῆγα εἰς τὸ κοράσιον.
Καὶ τότε τῆς βεργόλικος ἄκο τὸ τί τῆς λέγω:
«Εἶδες, ὀμμάτια μου καλά, τί ἀνδραγαθίας ἐποῖκα;»
Καὶ τότε τὸ κοράσιον ἄκου τὸ τί μοῦ λέγει:
«Εἶδα σε, ὀμμάτια μου καλά, τὸ φῶς τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν μου
τὸ πῶς ἐμονομάχησες ὅλους τοὺς ἀπελάτας,
καὶ ὅταν ἐμονομάχησες τὴν Μαξιμοὺν τὴν κόρην·
καὶ εἰς τὸ στενὸν τὸ πέραμαν, εἰς τὸ βαθὺν τὸ ρυάκιν,
πολλὰ πολλὰ μοῦ ἄργησες· πιστεύω νὰ τὴν εἶχες.»
Καὶ τότε τὴν βεργόλικον οὕτως τὴν συντυχαίνω:
«Ὡς ἔδωσα τὸ ἱππάριν της τὴν ὕστερην ραβδέαν,
ἐξέπεσεν ἡ Μαξιμοὺ ἀπὸ τὸ ἱππάριν κάτω·
ἦτον καὶ ἡ σέλα πάντερπνος, ὅλη κατεζουλίστην,
καὶ πίστευσέ με, λυγερή, ὅτι σὲ λέγω ἀλήθειαν,
ὅτι πολλὰ ἐλυπήθηκα τὰ δύο της τὰ φαρία.»
Καὶ τότε τὸ κοράσιον ἐγέλασε μεγάλως,
στρεφνὰ γλυκέα μ' ἐφίλησε καὶ ἐμὲν ἐσυχνοφίλει·
καὶ τότε τὸ κοράσιον οὕτως τὸ συντυχαίνω:
«Μετὰ τὸ φθείρειν Μαξιμοὺν τρία κακὰ ἔποικά την:
πρῶτον μὲν ὅτι εἶχα την, δεύτερον ὅτι ἐντράπη,
τρίτον καὶ περισσότερον ἐχάσεν τὴν ἀνδρείαν της.» '

Καὶ πομπεμένη ἀπόφευγεν ἀπὸ τὸν Μιλιμίτσην·
καὶ ὁ Λίανδρος ὁ ταπεινός, πλήρις κατησχυμένος,
καὶ οἱ ἑκατὸν οἱ πρόλοιποι τῆς Μαξιμοῦς οἱ ἀγοῦροι
καὶ ὁ θαυμαστὸς ὁ Κίνναμος, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ κὺρ Γιαννάκης
καὶ ἄλλοι ἀπελάτες ἑκατὸν καὶ ὁ Φ'λοπαππούς ὁ γέρων
πάντες ἐξεσκορπίσθησαν ἐκ τοῦ 'Ακρίτη τὸν φόβον,
νὰ μὴ τοὺς καταφθάση ἐκεῖ καὶ ὅλους κακοδοικήση.

1588–92: A riddling statement, playing for time—but with a *double entendre* now quite broad; perhaps an in-joke? Compare English 'saddle' for female pudendum (Partridge 1984). At 1560 the object is real but suggestive; here it is metaphorical and designed to shield, or make a joke out of, the hero's behaviour.

1593: The girl laughs now, just as she did over the first exploit (1120).

1594: I read ἐφίλησε for E's unmetrical ἐπερίλαβε, basing this on 915 and on

And when I had done it to the whore Maximou,
at once I rode and went to the maid.
And then listen to what I said to the maid lissom as a bough:
"Did you see, my dear eyes, what brave deeds I did?"
And then the maid, listen to what she said to me:
"My dear eyes, light of my eyes, I saw
how alone you fought all the raiders,
and when you fought a duel with the maid Maximou.
But in the narrow ravine, in the deep stream-bed,
long, long you loitered, I tell you—I believe you had her."
And then thus I conversed with the maid lissom as a bough:
"When I gave her horse the final club-blow,
Maximou fell from the horse;
and the saddle which was lovely, it was all wrecked.
And believe me, lissom maid, that I tell the truth:
I was heartily sorry about her two steeds."
And then the maid laughed aloud;
tightly, sweetly she embraced me and gave me kiss upon kiss;
and then thus I conversed with the maid:
"Along with deflowering Maximou, I did three things to her:
first I had her; secondly she was shamed;
thirdly, and above all, she lost her valour."'

And she was carted off in disgrace by Milimitses;
and humbled Liandros, utterly shamed;
and Maximou's three hundred other lads;
and wonderful Kinnamos; and sir Giannakes too;
and a further hundred raiders; and old Philopappous—
they were all scattered in fear of Akrites,
lest he catch up with them and make sorry work of them all.

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the sense of 'embrace' for φιλῶ at 1164.

1596–8: The 'figure of three', no doubt proverbial verses (cf AR 700–1).

1599: I punctuate with A note: the coda, returning us to a third- person narrator, catalogues all the names; and all of Akrites' border deeds are seen as encapsulated in the story related here.

Ὡς ἔχει ἡ νεότης πάντοτε τὴν ἡδονὴν εἰς κόρον
καὶ συνεπαίρνεται πολλὰ εἰς πλοῦτον καὶ εἰς δόξαν,
πάντα ἐσυνετέλεσεν ὁ Διγενὴς Ἀκρίτης.
Ἦτον πάντοτε ἐξάκουστος εἰς ἀριστείας μεγάλας,
ἀπὸ γὰρ τὴν ἀνατολὴν μέχρι τοῦ ἡλίου τὴν δύσιν
τὸ ὄνομάν του ἐξήγουν το εἰς ἅπαντα τὸν κόσμον.
Καὶ ἀφῶν τὸν ἐφοβήθηκεν ἡ Οἰκουμένη ὅλη,
καὶ ἀμιράδας ὑπέταξεν πολλοὺς καὶ Ἀραβίτας
καὶ ἀρχιληστὰς ἐφόνευσεν καὶ ὅλους τοὺς ἀπελάτας,
καὶ ἀφῶν ἀπομερίμνησεν τὸ κρούειν καὶ τὸ λαμβάνειν,
καὶ μέριμναν οὐδὲν εἶχεν περὶ ἄλλας ἐμνοστίας,
ἔδοξεν τὸν νεώτερον εἰς κάμπον κατοικῆσαι.
Πᾶσαν κατεψηλάφησεν τὴν παραποταμίαν
καὶ οὐκ ηὗρεν τόπον ἀρεστὸν νὰ κατοικήσῃ Ἀκρίτης
καὶ εἰς τὸν Ἀφράτην ποταμὸν ἠράσθη κατοικῆσαι
καὶ ὡς ἤθελεν καὶ ἐπόθει το ἐκεῖ ἔποικεν τὰ κάστρη·
καὶ ἀνέδραμεν τοῦ ποταμοῦ πᾶσαν τοποθεσίαν·
καὶ εἰς τόπον ὑπολίβαδον ἦτον πολὺς δενδριώνας
καὶ γύρωθεν ἐστέκασιν ὡραῖα κατάσκια δένδρη
καὶ ὕδατα πανώραια ἐκ τὰ ὄρη κατεβαίνουν
κ' ἐφαίνετο ἡ τοποθεσία πανώραια ὡς παραδείσιν.
Καὶ ἐδίωξε τὸν ποταμὸν ἐξ αὗτον τὸ λιβάδιν

1618: I so translate παραποταμίαν for the necessary sense, a different one from that of παρεποταμίαν at EA 1199. I suggest that the original reading was ἀναποταμίαν (Kriaras 1971: 124), i.e. a river close to its source in high ground. The sense then is that Akrites could find no suitable place to settle down in his old upland haunts but chose to settle by the riverside on the plain.

1619: An *akrites* must live on the border by definition: the site for palace and

The Retirement and Death of Akrites

Since youth ever has pleasure to excess
and is greatly taken with wealth and glory,
everything was accomplished by Digenes Akrites.
He was ever famous for deeds of great might:
from East to West
his name was told of in all the world.
But when the whole inhabited world had him in awe,
and he had subdued many emirs and Arabians,
and slain robber chiefs and all the raiders,
and when he had his fill of giving and taking blows,
and had no care for other delights,
the youth saw fit to live on the plain.
He investigated carefully the whole district away from the river,
but Akrites could not find a place pleasing to live in.
But it was by the river Euphrates that it was his pleasure to live;
and as he wished and desired it was there that he made his castle.
And he went over every site by the river;
and in a place of pasture there was a large grove,
and all around stood fine shady trees,
and lovely waters flowed down from the mountains;
and the site appeared lovely as a paradise.
And he diverted the river away from that meadow,

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tomb symbolizes the role.

1620: The Euphrates' traditional role as a real or symbolic border is seen from ARM 31.

1623ff: The description of the *locus amoenus* is somewhat disordered but not in such a way as to make its purpose hard to understand.

1626: 'paradise' in its original Persian sense 'garden'.

καὶ ἐποίησεν τόπον πάντερπνον καὶ ὡραῖον παραδείσιν
καὶ ἐποίησεν περίχωρον καὶ ὡραῖον γὰρ χωρίον.
Τείχια τοῦ ἔκτισεν λαμπρὰ μετὰ τοὺς προμαχῶνας 1630
καὶ ἀπ' ἔξω ὀρθομαρμάρωσις φαίνεται ἀπὸ μακρόθεν,
πάντερπνος, ξενοχάραγος, ἐξέχωρος ἐκ πάντων.
Καὶ ἀπέκλεισεν τὰ τέσσερα τοῦ ποταμοῦ κλωνάρια 1634
καὶ ἀρδεύει τὸ παράβουνον καὶ ὅλον τὸ ἀνατρέχει.
Φισκίνας ἔστησε πολλάς, χυτοῦ οἰκονομημένας,
διὰ τὸ ποτίζειν ἐξ αὐτὰς τόπους ἀποκλεισθέντας
‹καὶ› ἐποίησεν βιβάρια πανθαύμαστα ἰχθύων. 1638
Καὶ ἐφύτευσαν φοινίκια εἰς αὐτὸν τὸ παραδείσιν 1641
καὶ ἐφέρασιν τὸν βάρσαμον ἐκ τῆς Αἰγύπτου χώρας: 1640
τὰ φύλλα του εἶναι πράσινα καὶ κόκκινον τὸ ἄνθος 1642
καὶ ἡ ρίζα του εἶναι πιθαμὴ καὶ ὅλη ξυλαλόη
. . . καὶ ὁ καρπός του ἔν' μόσχος
καὶ οἱ κλῶνοι του εἶναι κόκκινοι καὶ φιλωτὰ κλωσμένοι
καὶ ἐξέρχεται ἐκ τὴν ρίζαν του ὕδωρ κ' ἔναι χιονάτο,
μυρίζει δὲ ὡς ροδόσταμον καὶ ἀπολιγώνει ἀνθρώπους.
Καὶ αὐλὴν ἐποῖκεν θαυμαστήν, πανώραιαν φισκίναν,
καὶ τά 'μπροσθεν . . . μεμυρισμένα δένδρη.
'Εποίησεν καὶ ἀνώγαιον, αὐλὴν δὲ ὑπερῷον 1650
καὶ τὴν ἐπερικύκλωσεν ὅλην τριγύρου γύρου
καὶ ἐπέστησεν ὁλόχρυσα καὶ ὁλάργυρα ζωδία,
λέοντας, πάρδους καὶ ἀετούς, πέρδικας καὶ νεράδας
καὶ χύνουν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος καὶ ἐκ τῶν πτερουγίων
νερὸν καθάριον, κρούσταλλον, ὕδωρ μεμυρισμένον,
μὲ ταῦτα δὲ ἐμπαίνουσιν εἰς πανωραίας φισκίνας.
Καὶ ἐκρέμασεν χρυσόκλωβα εἰς τοῦ δενδροῦ τοὺς κλώνους
κ' ἔχουν ὡραίους ψιττακοὺς καὶ κιλαδοῦν καὶ λέγουν:
«Χαίρου, 'Ακρίτη, χαίρου μετὰ τῆς ποθητῆς σου.»

1629: I include the second half of the verse deleted by A: neither the chiming nor the tautology are so offensive as to make the line inconceivable.

1636: Following the MS, I delete ἀπό before χυτοῦ for the metre.

1653: Nereids, classically speaking; but the word is MG for 'fairy', characteristically associated with water (νερό).

and made a delightful place and a lovely paradise,
and made a perimeter and a lovely place within.
1630 He made it magnificent walls with towers,
and the outer marble covering could be seen from afar:
delightful, rarely carved, distinctive from all other.
1634 And he cut off the four tributaries of the river
1635 and irrigated the land by the hill and the water ran over it all.
He set up many pools of concrete construction
in order to water with them secluded spots;
1638 and he made wonderful fish-tanks.
1641 And they planted palms in this paradise;
1640 and brought balsam from Egypt:
1642 its leaves are green and its flower red
and its root is a span thick, all aromatic wood,
and its fruit is scented,
1645 and its branches are red and lovingly intertwined;
and water comes out from its roots, and it is as cool as snow,
and it smells like rose-water and makes men swoon.
And he made a wonderful court and a lovely pool,
and in front there were aromatic trees.
1650 He also made an upper storey and a raised courtyard
and surrounded it all on all sides
with animals set up all of silver and gold:
lions, pards and eagles, partridges and fairies;
and they poured from their mouths and their wings
1655 pure water, crystal scented water;
and through them it went into lovely pools.
And he hung golden cages on the boughs of a tree;
and they contained fine parrots which would sing and say:
'Fare thee well, Akrites, fare thee well with the one of thy desire.'

1658–9: The parrots say χαίρου—'rejoice' or 'farewell'? In effect it is both, as the next verse begins the transition from life to death. *Pace* Saunier 1972, one cannot assume that an old folk motif of birds as prophets of death (as in the Pontic song of the Death of Akrites; see the introductory note to this poem) lies behind these parrots: these exotic birds may have been made more familiar by a folk

Ἐποίησεν γέφυραν τερπνὴν ἀπάνω εἰς τὸν Εὐφράτην·
βαστᾶ την μονοκέρατον ἀπὸ πέρα ἕως πέρα
κ' ἔκτισε τετρακάμαρον 'ς τὴν γέφυραν ἀπάνω,
ὑπόθολον, πανθαύμαστον, μετὰ λευκῶν μαρμάρων·
βαστοῦν το κιόνια πάντερπνα, πράσινα, πανωραῖα
καὶ κάτωθεν ὑπέστησεν κιβούριν τοῦ θανάτου,
εὐθὺς ἵνα ἀποτεθῇ τὸ σῶμα τοῦ νεωτέρου.
Ἀκούσατε, θαυμάσατε τὸν τάφον τοῦ νεωτέρου,
ὅτι ἦτον θαυμαστὸς πολλά, παρὰ τοὺς ἄλλους πλέον,
παρὰ τοῦ βασιλεύσαντος εἰς τὴν Περσίαν χώραν,

. . .

ἐποίησεν πολυμήχανον καὶ πανωραῖον τάφον
καὶ ἐτέθην ἡ βασίλισσα τοῦ πρὸς Παρασογάρδου.
Οὗτος γὰρ ὁ παγκάλλιστος καὶ πανωραῖος τάφος,
μὴ τὸν δοκεῖτε, οἱ ἄρχοντες, ὅτι ψευδὴς ὑπάρχει,
ἀλλ' ἐκ παντὸς πιστεύετε ὅτι ἀληθὴς ὑπάρχει,
ὅτι βεβαίως εἴρηται εἰς πάντα ἀληθεύων.
Οὐ μόνον εἰς τὸν θάνατον, . . .
ἀπάνω εἰς τὸν τάφον του ἐν ἀληθείᾳ τὸ λέγω.
Εἰς τὸ κουβούκλιν δὲ σιμά, ἔμπροσθεν τῆς φισκίνας,
εἰς τὸ ἀποσκίασμα τοῦ δενδροῦ ὡραῖον κρεβάτιν στέκει·
οἱ ρίζες ἦσαν σμάραγδοι καὶ τὰ κανόνια κρύα
καὶ τὰ ποδάρια ὁλόχρυσα, διὰ λίθων πολυτίμων·
ἡ μέση δὲ τοῦ κράβατου θεμένη ὀξὺν μετάξιν
καὶ κεῖται σαρακήνικον μεταξωτὸν τὸ πεύχιν
καὶ ἀπάνω κεῖται πιλωτόν, ὀξὺν πρασινοβούλιν
καὶ ὑφάπλωμα σωληνωτὸν μὲ τὰς χρυσὰς νεράδας
καὶ κεῖται ἀπάνω ὁ Διγενὴς πλάγιον ἀκουμπισμένος.

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tradition which took the episode over from a MS.

1660ff: A identifies the bridge with a Roman bridge of c.200 A.D. which still stands at the meeting-point of two tributaries of the Euphrates north of Samosata. In that case we have a relic here of a local aetiological folk tradition.

1668–71: A learned excursus on Chosroes, part of the creating of Akrites as a 'Roman' Alexander. At least one verse has dropped out.

He made a delightful bridge over the Euphrates:
he stretched it out with a single arch from the one side to the other.
And he built a group of four arches on the bridge
with a wonderful dome of white marble;
it was held up by delightful columns, green and lovely;
and beneath it he set his sarcophagus,
so that the body of his young self might be interred without delay.
Listen and marvel at the young man's tomb.
(For it was wonderful, more than any other,
more than that of the one who reigned over all Persia, *who*
made an ornate, lovely tomb;
and in it was his queen, in the region of Parsa Garda.)
And as for this beautiful, lovely tomb,
do not think that it is false, masters;
but fully believe that it is true in every detail:
for it is described with certainty, true in every detail,
Not only by death,
but by his tomb in truth I say it.
And near his chamber, in front of a pool,
in the shade of a tree, stood a fine bed:
its feet were emerald and its frame crystal,
and its legs all of gold with precious stones.
The middle of the bed was laid with blue silk,
and the cover was of silk of Saracen make,
and on it lay a wool cover of blue with green stripes
and a tucked mattress with golden fairies—
and on it lay Digenes, resting on one arm.

1673: ἄρχοντες a relic of oral delivery: it is tempting to see these authentic eastern elements as being derived from Arethas' Paphlagonians and then written up by a learned poet here.

1676–7: Some badly mangled oath of veracity.

1678ff: A somewhat abrupt shift of focus. Only at 1686 does Akrites appear to view, the way prepared by lavish description of the setting (cf. LE 178ff).

Καὶ ἔμπροσθεν τῶν γονάτων του κάθεται ἡ ποθητή του
καὶ τριγύρου του στέκουσιν τριακόσια παλληκάρια
καὶ οἱ τριακόσιοι εἶν' ἔμορφοι καὶ κόκκινα φοροῦσιν·
βαστοῦν σπαθιὰ ὁλοψήφωτα καὶ στέκουν ἔμπροσθέν του,
τοὺς εἶχεν πάντας φύλακας εἰς τὰς στενὰς κλεισούρας
καὶ ἐφύλαττον τὴν Ρωμανίαν ἀπὸ βάρβαρα ἔθνη.
Καὶ ὡσὰν πουλίτσια πάντερπνα, ὅταν ἀποπετάσουν,
ἐκφέρουν κτύπον πάντερπνον τὸν θαυμαστὸν Ἀκρίτην.
Ἐπειδὴ πάντα τὰ τερπνὰ τοῦ πλάνου κόσμου τούτου
θάνατος τὰ ὑποκρατεῖ καὶ Ἅδης τὰ κερδαίνει,
κατέφθασεν καὶ σήμερον τοῦ Διγενῆ Ἀκρίτη.
Κατανοοῦντες κλαύσατε τὸν Διγενὴν Ἀκρίτην
καὶ βλέποντες θρηνήσατε ἀπὸ βαθέων καρδίας
τὴν συμφορὰν τὴν γίνεται, θέαμαν καὶ ὀδύνην.
Ἀπότε ἐκτίστην ὁ παρὼν καὶ δόλιος κόσμος οὗτος,
εἰς τὰς γενέας ἅπασας τοιοῦτος οὐκ ἐφάνη,
οἷον τοῦτον τὸν νεώτερον, τὸν θαυμαστὸν Ἀκρίτην,
οὔτε εἰς ἀνδρείαν, εἰς ἔπαινον, εἰς δόξαν, εἰς λογάριν.
Καὶ σήμερον πλερώνεται καὶ χάνεται ἐκ τὸν κόσμον,
εἰς νόσον γὰρ θανάσιμον ἔπεσεν καὶ ἀποθνήσκει.
Καὶ ἔμπηξε τοὺς ἀγκώνους του εἰς τὸ προσκέφαλόν του
καὶ τοὺς ἀγούρους του ἔλεγεν, οὕτως τοὺς παραγγέλλει:
«Θυμᾶσθε, παλληκάρια μου, τῆς Ἀραβίας τοὺς κάμπους,
ὅτι ἦσαν κάμποι ἄνυδροι καὶ καύματα μεγάλα,
ὅντε μᾶς ἐγυρίσασιν ἔνοπλοι Ἀραβίτες

1687ff: Both the lads and the wife where folk songs (reflecting earlier versions) plump for one or other; G decides to concentrate exclusively on the wife.

1692: In the spirit of 1613, an addition which shows how remote the real akritic world has become. The word βάρβαρος a learned one conspicuously absent from LE.

1693–4: Like the bird similes elsewhere in the tradition (e.g. RA 966–7), closely observed; here it expresses (i) the sound of their talking as they come home to roost and reminisce; (ii) their numbers and weakness compared with their leader

And at his knee sat the one of his desire;
and around him stood three hundred braves,
and the three hundred were handsome and dressed in red;
they carried swords all adorned with stones and stood before him.
He had them all as guards in the narrow passes,
and they guarded the land of the Romans from barbarian races.
And like delightful birds when they come to roost,
they made a delightful sound to the ears of the wonderful Akrites.
Since all the delights of this deceiving world
are under the control of Death, and Hades wins them,
today it has caught up with Digenes Akrites.
Knowing this, weep for Digenes Akrites,
and looking on this, weep from the depths of the heart
at the misfortune which occurs, a sight for wonder and a pain.
Ever since this present false world was created,
in all generations there has appeared none the like of him,
the like of this young man, the wonderful Akrites—
not in valour, in repute, in glory or in riches.
But today he comes to his end and vanishes from the world,
for he has fallen victim to a deadly disease and is dying.
And he leant his elbows on his pillow
and spoke to his lads, and commanded them thus:
'My braves, remember the plains of Arabia,
how there were waterless plains and burning heat,
when we were surrounded by armed Arabians—

(1709ff; cf. RA 880).

1698–1700: Like 1673, an address to a plural audience, but in the spirit of producing an improving story in the spirit of the *Spaneas*.

1706: A perfunctory concession to biography: in the old lays, as in the MG folk songs, the death—obviously a peaceful one—will have required no explanation.

1709ff: For the related MG folk songs see the introductory note. The locale and the foes in 1709–14 are not material we find in the surviving E poems, but, in the light of the other parts, it is likely that this one too summarizes older lays.

καὶ ἐγλήγορα οὐκ εὑρέθητε ὅλοι ἁρματωμένοι
καὶ οἱ τριακόσιοι ἐκύκλωσαν καὶ ἐβάλαν με εἰς τὴν μέσην
κ' ἕως νὰ καβαλικεύσετε, ἐσκόρπισά τους ὅλους.
Πάλιν, ἀγοῦροι μου, εἴδετε καὶ ἄλλον θαῦμαν μέγαν:
εἰς τὸ στενὸν τὸ πέραμαν τοῦ ποταμοῦ τοῦ 'Αφράτου
ἦτον ὁ κάλαμος δασὺς καὶ ὑπόδροσος ὁ τόπος·
ἐκεῖ ἔστησα τὴν τέντα μου νὰ περιαναπαυθοῦμεν
καὶ ἀπότι ἀναπαύθημαν, ἔδοξε μας μετριάζειν
καὶ ὅλοι σας ἀνατρέχετε ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ ποτάμιν.
Καὶ ἐξέβησαν δύο λέοντες ὁμοῦ μὲ τὰς λεαίνας
καὶ ἔσυρναν τὰ λεοντόπουλα ὅλα παρακρουσμένα·
καὶ ὡσὰν τὰ εἴδετε, ἄγουροι, εὐθὺς ἐφύγετε ὅλοι
καὶ ἐμὲν μόνον ἀφήσετε ἀπέσω εἰς τὰ θηρία,
καὶ εἴδετε ὅτι ἐπέζευσα, μὲ τὸ ραβδὶν τὰ ἐσέβην.
Καὶ οἱ λέοντες ἀποπίσω μου ἤρχουντα νὰ μὲ φᾶσιν
καὶ ὡς ἔδωκα τὴν λέαιναν ἀπάνω εἰς τὸ κεφάλιν,
οἱ λέοντες ἐμπήκασιν ἀπέσω εἰς τὸ καλάμιν.
(Μά τὸν Θεόν, ‹ἀγοῦροι μου›, ἀλήθειαν σᾶς τὸ λέγω:
μά τὸ μυστήριον τὸ φρικτὸν ὁποὺ μὲ παραστέκει,
οὐκ ἐσυνέκρινα ποτὲ θάνατον ἐδικόν σας·
διὰ τοῦτο σᾶς ἐνθύμισα, ὡς διὰ νὰ μοῦ θυμᾶσθε.)
Καὶ εἰς τὰ ἄλλα οὐδὲν ἐφθάσετε, τὰ μόνος μου ἐπολέμουν,
καὶ ἐγὼ μόνος σᾶς ἔβλεπα ἐσᾶς καὶ τὴν καλήν μου.
Καὶ πάλιν εἰς τὴν τέντα μου πόσοι ἀπελάτες ἦλθαν,
ποίας τρικυμίας ὑπέμεινα εἰς τὰς βαρέας ἀνάγκας
καὶ πόσοι ἐβουλήθησαν νὰ μὲ τὴν ἀφαρπάξουν,
τὴν πάγκαλον, πανέμνοστον, ὡραίαν ποθητήν μου.
'Αρχὴν ὄνταν ἐξέβηκεν ἀπὸ τὰ γονικά της,
ἐγὼ καὶ τούτη μοναχοὶ ὁδεύαμεν ἀντάμα

1723: 1712 looked like mere slackness, but in the light of this it was sheer cowardice. We find such a narration (to the cowardly Fernando) in the *Cid* (3316ff): 'Do you remember when we fought near the great city of Valencia?...'

1729–32: I bracket this piece of moralizing (so too 1750–8) to show how crudely

and in a trice you were nowhere to be seen, armed though you were.
And the three hundred surrounded me and got me in the middle;
and by the time you rode I had scattered them all.
And another time, my lads, you saw another great wonder.
At the narrow crossing of the river Euphrates
the reeds were thick and the ground somewhat damp;
there I set my tent for us to rest.
But when we had rested we saw fit to relax,
and all of you ran into the river.
But two lions came out together with the lionesses,
and they brought with them the cubs all excited—
and when you saw them, lads, at once you all took to flight,
and left me all alone in there among the beasts.
But you saw how I dismounted and went at them with my staff;
and the lions came after me to devour me—
but when I gave the lioness a blow on the head,
the lions went into the reed-bed.
(By God, my lads, it is the truth I tell you:
by the fearful mystery that is at hand,
I have never agreed to the death of any one of you;
I have reminded you of this that you may remember me.)
And on other occasions you were not there in time when I was fighting alone,
and I alone was looking after you and my loved one.
And another time, when many raiders came to my tent,
you saw what storms I withstood in hour of great need;
and how many men planned to snatch her from me,
the beautiful, delightful, lovely one of my desire.
When first she left her parents' house,
she and I were making our way together,
and a dragon called to us from inside a reed-bed;

---

it's been foisted into this traditional material of heroic boasting and insult.

1735–49: The story of the abduction retold; or, to be precise, how the hero protected his love after. It is perhaps out of 1746–7 that the redactor will have cobbled EA 1091.

καὶ δράκος μᾶς ἐλάλησεν μέσ' ἀπὸ τὸ καλάμιν
καὶ παλληκάρι ἐγίνετον ἡδονικὸν καὶ ὡραῖον·
ἰστίαν καὶ φλόγαν ἤβγαλεν ἀπὸ τοῦ στόματός του
καὶ ἄγρια μοῦ ἐλάλησεν, ἵνα μοῦ τὴν ἐπάρῃ
καὶ ἐμὲν νὰ φάγῃ . . .
Καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ πάντων δυνατὸς καὶ πάντων κυριεύων,
αὐτὸς μᾶς ἐβοήθησεν, καὶ οὐδὲν ἐποίησέν μας.
Καὶ εἴδετε, παλληκάρια μου, μόνος πῶς ἐπειράσθην
καὶ ἐσεῖς ἀλλοῦ ηὑρίσκεσθε καὶ μετ' ἐμὲν οὐκ ἦσθε.
(Τοιοῦτον πάλιν λέγω σας ὀρθῶς καὶ νουθετῶ σας:
ἔχετε πάντοτε εἰς νοῦν μελέτην τοῦ θανάτου,
ἔχετε ἀγάπην ἄπειρον ἀμφότεροι εἰς τὸν κόσμον
καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ πάντων δυνατός, ὁ συνέχων τὴν κτίσιν,
αὐτὸς νὰ σᾶς κατευοδοῖ εἰς ἀριστείαν μεγάλην
καὶ πάντες μέλλομεν σταθῆν τὴν φοβερὰν ἡμέραν
. . . ἐλέγχουσαν τὰς πράξεις
καὶ ἕκαστος λάβῃ ἀνταμοιβὴν ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου ἔργου
καὶ ὁ Θεὸς ὁ πολυεύσπλαχνος νὰ μὴ σᾶς διαχωρίσῃ.)
Τοὺς τριακοσίους ἀφήνω σας ἀπὸ ἑνὸς φαρίου,
καὶ ἀπὸ λουρικίων τριῶν καὶ ἀπὸ ἑνὸς σπαθίου,
τοὺς τριακοσίους ἀφήνω σας ἀπὸ ἑνὸς ῥαβδίου.
Καὶ πάλιν τοῦτο λέγω σας, πάλιν νὰ μοῦ θυμᾶσθε,
μὴ εἰσέλθετε, ἀγοῦροι μου, εἰς ἕτερον αὐθέντην,
ὅτι Ἀκρίτην ἕτερον εἰς κόσμον οὐ θεωρεῖτε.»
Καὶ ἀφότου ἀπεπλήρωσεν ὅλην τὴν χάριν τούτην,
ἐσκέφθην ἄγγελον πυρὸς ἀπὸ οὐρανοῦ ἐπελθόντα·
καὶ ὡς τὸν εἶδε ὁ Διγενής, ἐτρόμαξεν μεγάλως
καὶ τὴν καλήν του ἐφώνιαξεν νὰ ἰδῇ τὴν φαντασίαν:
«Βλέπεις, καλή, τὸν ἄγγελον ὁποὺ μὲ θέλει πάρει;
Ἐλύθησαν τὰ χέρια μου ἐκ τὴν ἰδέαν τοῦ ἀγγέλου
καὶ ἐλύθησαν οἱ ὦμοι μου ἐκ τὴν ἰδέαν τοῦ ἀγγέλου.»
Τὸν ἄγγελον δικολογᾷ καὶ τὴν καλήν του λέγει:
«Καλή, ὡς εἶδες ἀπ' ἀρχῆς, ὅτε εἴχαμεν τὸν πόθον,

1764: See Introduction, pp. 7, 11: the verse, even in its earliest form, will have expressed nostalgia for a lost age.

and it turned into a young man, pleasant and handsome:
fire and flame came out of its mouth,
and wildly it spoke to me of taking her
and devouring me.
But Almighty God, who rules over all things,
helped us, and the dragon did nothing to us—
and you saw, my braves, how I was put to the test alone,
and you were elsewhere and were not with me.
(Again such I say rightly to you and give you advice:
always have in mind the thought of death;
have boundless love, all of you, toward men;
and may Almighty God, who maintains Creation,
send you off to do mighty deeds.
And all of us shall stand at the fearful day
which judges deeds,
and each shall receive his due for his actions,
and may merciful God not part you.)
I leave each of the three hundred of you a steed,
and three breastplates and a sword;
to each of the three hundred of you I leave a club.
And again I say this to you, again remember me:
enter the service of no other master, lads,
for you will not see another Akrites in this world.'
But when he had completed the making of this gift,
he saw an angel of fire coming from the heavens.
And when Digenes saw it, he trembled greatly,
and called on his loved one to see the vision:
'Loved one, do you see the angel that will take me?
My arms have turned weak at the sight of the angel,
and my shoulders have turned weak at the sight of the angel.'
He told the angel to wait and spoke to his loved one:
'Dear one, as you saw from the beginning, when we fell in love—

1773ff: ἀπ' ἀρχῆς also used in LE (355) of a love that has to overcome obstacles. Here the hero repeats to his wife the material of 1735ff.

θυμᾶσαι, ἠξεύρεις, λυγερή, τὰ πρωτινὰ ἐκεῖνα, 1787
ὅτι πολλοὶ ἐβουλεύθησαν τοῦ νὰ μὲ θανατώσουν
καὶ πάντα τοὺς ἐζύγωνα καὶ ἄλλα πλέα ἔκαμά τους·
τοὺς ληστάδας ἐπάταξα καὶ ὅλην τὴν Συρίαν, 1790
τὰς ἐρήμους κατέστησα πόλεις κατοικημένας· 1791
ταῦτα ἐποίησα, καλή, ἐσένα νὰ κερδέσω. 1792
Ἀλλὰ πληροφορέσου το ὅτι ἐγὼ ἀποθνήσκω.
Σήμερον χωριζόμεθα καὶ ἀπέρχομαι εἰς τὸν κόσμον 1774
τὸν μαῦρον, σκοτεινότατον, καὶ πάγω κάτω εἰς Ἅδην
καὶ σήμερον πληρώνει με ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὑπάγω.
Καλή μου, μὴ μὲ δικαστῇς εἰς τὸν ἐκεῖσε κόσμον,
μὴ σταθῶμεν ἀμφότεροι εἰς τὸ δεινὸν κριτήριον.
Οἶδα, φαγεῖν καὶ πιεῖν ἔχεις καί νὰ λουσθῇς καὶ ἀλλάξῃς 1779
καὶ ἐσένα ἀφήνω σε πλουσίαν πολλά, ἀπὸ παντόθεν· 1780
λογάριν ἔχεις περισσόν, ἀσήμιν καὶ χρυσάφιν,
οἱ τρίκλινοί μου γέμουσιν βλατία ὑφασμένα.
Μηδέν, ‹καλή μου›, ἐνθυμηθῇς ἄλλον νὰ περιλάβῃς·
καὶ ἂν θυμηθῇς, ἂς θυμηθῇς καλοῦ νεωτέρου ἀγάπην,
νὰ μὴ φοβᾶται κίνδυνον εἰς τοὺς βαρέους πολέμους· 1785
καὶ πάντα φέρνε κατὰ νοῦν καὶ ἐμέν, μὴ λησμονήσῃς.

Ὁ Χάρος τρέπει ἐκ παντὸς τὸν μήποτε τραπέντα,
ὁ Χάροντας χωρίζει με ἀπὸ σοῦ τῆς φιλτάτης, 1795
ὁ Ἅδης παραλαμβάνει με, πολὺν ἔχω τὸν πόνον
σοῦ τῆς ἀθλίας ἕνεκεν, τῆς ταπεινῆς, τῆς χήρας.

1791: This exaggeration indicates an outlook governed by the Alexander model; perhaps a great extrapolation from LE 244: δράκοντα τῆς Συρίας.

1784–6: This is a popular motif and may have been the end of an early lay, as A in effect suggests (cf. Academy 1962: 37–8); but see note on 1867.

1794–*fin*: A prints this whole section as an appendix, and I too indicate its separability. But, though the passage is disproportionate in every sense, there are reasons against rejecting it: (i) it is early, predating G, and in fact contains some of the rather few verses shared by the two versions; (ii) the Christian

1787 you remember, you know, lissom maid, what happened in those early days,
when many planned to kill me;
but every time I chased them off and did much else to them besides.
1790 (I trampled the robbers and all Syria;
1791 I made the deserts inhabited cities.)
1792 I did this, loved one, to win you.
But be informed that I am dying:
1774 today we are parted and I leave for
1775 the black, dark world, and go down to Hades;
and today Death brings me to my end and I go.
(My dear, do not judge me in the next world,
lest we both stand in the terrible Judgement.)
1779 I know that you have to eat and drink and bathe and change,
1780 and I leave you wealthy in every respect:
you have great wealth, silver and gold;
my couches are weighty with golden tapestries.
Dear, do not think to embrace another—
but if you do think to, may you think of the love of a fine young man,
1785 one who does not fear danger in hard battles.
And always bring me to mind, do not forget.

Charos turns in flight the one who was never turned in flight;
1795 Charos separates me from you, dearest;
Hades overcomes me—I suffer great pain
for you, wretched, poor widow.

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preoccupation is clear enough from 1695ff, and has (iii) a close parallel in the *Cid* 330ff (the hero's wife's speech to him on parting, at great length, and with many of the same examples); (iv) the metrical oddity, while ugly, is to some extent a consequence of the learned language.

1794–6: With Saunier (1979) I believe it is preferable to regard this as the origin of the MG struggle of Digenes with Charos and not an adaptation of an existing myth of the same type.

Λοιπὸν δυσώπει τὸν Θεὸν ἐκ βάθους τῆς καρδίας,
ἱκέτευε τὸν συμπαθῆ καὶ φιλάνθρωπον μόνον,
ὅπως νὰ μεταμεληθῇ καὶ ἀφήσῃ τὴν ψυχήν μου.
Εἰ δὲ οὐ παρακληθῇ ὁ Θεὸς καὶ θέλῃ νὰ ἀποθάνω,
τὸν τῆς χηρείας καύσωνα οὐ δύνασαι ὑπομένειν,
ὡς διατὶ οὐδὲν ἔχεις τινὰ εἰς αὐτὸν τὸν κόσμον,
οὐ κύρην, οὐδὲ ἀδέλφια, οὐδὲ προστάτην ἄλλον.»
Ἐκείνη δὲ ὡς ἤκουσεν τὰ λόγια τοῦ καλοῦ της,
εὐθέως πρὸς ἀνατολὰς τὰς χεῖρας ἐκπετάσας,
πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν ἐλάλησεν φωνὴν πολλὰ θλιμμένην:
«Κύριε Θεέ, παμβασιλεῦ, ὁ κτίσας τοὺς αἰῶνας,
ὁ στερεώσας οὐρανὸν καὶ γῆν θεμελιώσας,
ὁ θάλασσαν τὴν ἄπειρον ψάμμῳ περιτειχίσας
καὶ τοὺς ἰχθύας πρὸς αὐτῆς προστάξας ζωογονᾶσθαι,
ὁ πλάσας δὲ καὶ τὸν Ἀδὰμ ἀπὸ γῆς καὶ τὴν Εὔαν,
ὁ τὸν τερπνὸν παράδεισον χειρὶ καταφυτεύσας,
ὁ λόγῳ συστησάμενος ὄρη τε καὶ τὰς νάπας,
φῶς καὶ ἀέραν δι' ἐμὲ δείξας τὴν τρισαθλίαν,
ὁ κατελθὼν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ὡς ἠθέλησας, Λόγε,
καὶ σαρκοφόρος δι' ἐμὲ γεγονώς, πλαστουργέ μου,
καὶ μητέραν τὴν ἄχραντον οὐρανὸν ἀπειργάσω
. . . καὶ γεννηθεὶς ἀρρεύστως
καὶ παθών, ὡς ηὐδόκησας, καὶ σταυρωθείς, Χριστέ μου,
ἀνάστασιν δωρούμενος κἀμοὶ τῷ πεπτωκότι,
ἀνάστησον, φιλάνθρωπε, καὶ τὸν ἐμὸν αὐθέντην
καὶ δός του ὑγείαν ἀπὸ ἀρχῆς ὡς ἐλεήμων, Λόγε,
καὶ μὴ ἰδῶ τὸν θάνατον ποτὲ τοῦ ποθητοῦ μου.
Ἀλλ' ὡς ποτὲ τὸν Λάζαρον ἀνέστησας, Χριστέ μου,
ὡς εἶδας γάρ, φιλάνθρωπε, Μάρθαν καὶ τὴν Μαρίαν
θερμῶς κινούσας δάκρυα, . . .
οὕτως καὶ νῦν ἀνάστησον νέον ἀπελπισμένον
ἀπὸ πάντων τῶν ἰατρῶν, γνωρίμων τε καὶ φίλων
καὶ ἐν σοὶ ἀναθέμενον τὰς ἐλπίδας ἁπάσας
καὶ εἰς τὴν σὴν βοήθειαν ἀεὶ ἐπιθαρροῦντα.
Ναί, δέσποτα φιλάνθρωπε, μόνε καρδιογνῶστα,
<ναί, κύριε>, ὁ δι' ἐμὲ ἑκουσίως πτωχεύσας,

So beseech God from the depths of your heart;
supplicate the loving and understanding One
that he may relent and let my soul be.
But if God relent not, and I die,
you will not be able to withstand the drought of widowhood,
for you have no-one else in this world—
no father, no brothers, no other protector.'
And when she heard her loved one's words,
at once she put her arms out to the East
and called out to God a cry of grief:
'Lord God, King of all, ruler of the ages,
Thou who hast made the firmament and founded the earth;
who hast walled round the boundless sea with sand
and ordered the fish to breed in it;
who hast made Adam from earth, and Eve;
who hast planted delightful Paradise by hand;
who hast set up mountains and glades by word;
who hast shown light and air to wretched me;
who hast descended, Word, from the heavens at will;
and who hast taken on the form of flesh for me, my Maker;
and who hast taken for Thy mother the stainless heaven.
Born without change,
and suffering, as Thou hast deemed fit, and crucified, my Christ;
making a gift of resurrection unto me the fallen one:
loving One, resurrect my lord;
and Word, merciful as Thou art, restore him to health;
and may I never see the death of the one of my desire.
But, my Christ, even as thou hast on a time resurrected Lazarus,
when, loving One, thou sawest Martha and Mary
shedding tears ardently;
even so now resurrect a youth despaired of
by all physicians, acquaintances and friends,
and who places in Thee all hopes,
and who takes cheer always in Thy aid.
Yea, loving Master, only knower of hearts,
yea, Lord, Thou who hast endured poverty for my sake,

ὁ τὴν ἐμὴν ἀσθένειαν ἐθελοντὶ φορέσας,
ὁ διαθρέψας ἄπειρον πλῆθος ἐκ πέντε ἄρτων,
μὴ παρίδῃς τὴν δέησιν ἐμοῦ τῆς ἀναξίας,
ἀλλ' ἐξαπόστειλον ταχὺ ἔλεος ἐξ ἁγίου,
κλῖνον τὸ οὖς σου, δέσποτα, εἰσάκουσον εὐχῆς μου,
πρόφθασον ἐν ἀνάγκαις νῦν, πρόφθασον ἐν τῇ θλίψει,
ἐλθὲ εἰς τὴν βοήθειαν ἡμῶν τῶν δεομένων
καὶ τὰ ἐλέη σου ἡμῖν θαυμάστωσον, οἰκτίρμων.
Ἐκ θανάτου ἀνάστησον, εὔσπλαχνε, σὸν ἱκέτην,
ἐκ θανάτου ἐξάρπασον νέον μὴ μεταγνόντα,
αὐτὸς γὰρ ἔφης, δέσποτα, κἂν ὅλως μὴ θελῆσαι
ἁμαρτωλοῦ τὸν θάνατον ἕως νὰ ἐπιστρέψῃ.
Καὶ νῦν, φιλάνθρωπε Θεέ, βοήθει τῷ κειμένῳ
καὶ ἔκτεινον τὴν κραταιὰν χεῖραν ὡς εὐεργέτης
καὶ ὡς τὸν Πέτρον ἔσωσας τοῦ θαλασσίου κινδύνου,
οὕτω καὶ νῦν ἐλέησον ἱκέτην σου ἀχρεῖον,
εἰ δ' οὔ, κέλευσον, δέσποτα, πρῶτον ἐμὲ τεθνάναι·
μὴ ἴδω τοῦτον ἄφωνον, κατακείμενον ἄπνουν,
κεκαλυμμένους ὀφθαλμοὺς ἔχοντα τοὺς ὡραίους·
μὴ ἴδω χεῖρας τε καλάς, ἀνδραγαθεῖν μαθούσας,
δεδεμένας σταυροειδῶς, νεκρικὰ συσταλμένας.
Μή μου τὰ δάκρυα, Χριστέ, παρίδῃς δεομένης,
μή με τοσαύτην κατιδεῖν παραχωρήσῃς θλίψιν,
ἀλλ' ἔπαρόν μου τὴν ψυχὴν πρὸ τοῦ γενέσθαι ταῦτα,
πάντα γὰρ λόγῳ δύνασαι, οὐδὲν ἀδυνατεῖ σοι.»
Ὡς δὲ καὶ ταῦτα ἔλεγε μετὰ πολλῶν δακρύων,
στραφεῖσα, τοῦτον αἰφνιδίως ὁρᾷ ψυχορραγοῦντα.
Καὶ τὸν πόνον τὸν ἄπειρον φέρειν μὴ δυναμένη,
πάνυ ἐλιγοθύμησε βαπτισθεῖσα τὴν θλίψιν
καὶ πεσοῦσα ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς παρέδωκεν τὸ πνεῦμα,
οὐ γὰρ ἐγίνωσκε ποτὲ ὑπάρχουσαν τὴν θλίψιν,
καὶ ἐν μιᾷ ἀμφότεροι τῇ ὥρᾳ τελευτῶσιν.

1867: A poignant ending of the kind found in one of the Pontic versions (N.G. Politis 1909b: 233–4). This version ends in a similar way (line 44: Οἱ

who willingly put on the garb of my weakness;
who nourished a boundless multitude with five loaves;
do not overlook the prayer of unworthy me,
but quickly send mercy in holiness;
bend Thine ear, Master, hearken unto my wish;
be swift now to aid me in time of need; be swift in grief;
come to the aid of us who pray;
and merciful One, make miracles for Thy pity.
Resurrect from Death Thy suppliant, merciful One;
snatch from Death a young man who has not repented;
for Thou hast said, Master, that Thou wishest not at all
the death of a sinner, but that he turn back to the right path.
And now, loving God, help him who lies sick,
and stretch out Thy mighty hand as benefactor;
and as Thou hast saved Peter from danger on the sea,
so now, Master, take pity on Thy hopeless suppliant.
But if not, master, decree that I die first:
may I not see him voiceless, lying breathless,
with his lovely eyes hidden;
may I not see his fine hands, expert in deeds of might,
crossed, arranged in the order of death.
Christ, do not overlook my tears as I pray;
do not permit me to look on such great affliction;
but take my soul before this come to pass;
for Thou canst do all things by word; nought is impossible for Thee.'

And as she was saying this with many tears,
turning suddenly she saw him in his death throes.
And being unable to bear the boundless pain,
she fainted away utterly, being baptized in grief;
and falling to the ground she gave up the ghost;
for she had never been acquainted with the existence of affliction.
And at the same moment they both reached their end.

δίσσ' μίαν ἐπέθαναν, οἱ δίσσ' μίαν ἐθάψαν), and because it contains another old formula (verse 41, cf. EA 1165) should be treated with some respect.

* * *

Σήμερον ἄλλος οὐρανός, σήμερον ἄλλη ἡμέρα,
σήμερον τὰ ἀρχοντόπουλα θέλουν καβαλικεύσει·
μόνον τοῦ κὺρ Ἀρμούρη ὁ υἱὸς οὐδὲν καβαλικεύει.
Καὶ τότε πάλιν τὸ παιδὶν 's τὴν μάναν του ὑπαγαίνει:
«Νὰ 'πιχαρῇς τὰ ἀδέλφια μου, ‹μάνα, ἂς καβαλικεύσω,›
νὰ ἰδῇς καὶ τὸν πατέρα μου, μάνα, ἂς καβαλικεύσω.»
Καὶ τότε πάλι ἡ μάνα του τοῦ Ἀρμούρη συντυχαίνει:
«Ἐσὺ μικρὸν καὶ ἀνέλικον, καβάλα δὲν σὲ πρέπει·
ἀμὴ ἂν θέλης, υἱὲ καλέ, διὰ νὰ καβαλικεύσης,
‹εἰς τὸ ἀνώγαιον› κρέμεται κοντάριν τοῦ πατρός σου,
τὸ ἅρπαξεν ὁ κύρης σου ἐκ τὴν Βαβυλωνίαν,
ἀπάνω κάτω ὁλόχρυσον, διὰ λίθου μαργαρίτου,
καὶ ἂν τὸ λυγίσης μίαν φορὰν καὶ ἂν τὸ λυγίσης δύο,
ἂν τὸ λυγίσης τρεῖς φορές, τότε ἂς καβαλικεύσης.»
Καὶ τότε πάλιν τὸ παιδίν, τὸ Μικροαρμουροπούλιν,
κλαίοντας τὴν σκάλα ἀνέβαινε, γελώντας κατεβαίνει·
προτοῦ τὸ πιάση ἐπιάνετον, προτοῦ τὸ σείση ἐσειέτον,
εἰς τὸν βραχίονα τό 'δεσεν ‹κ'› ἐσείστη ‹κ'› ἐλυγίστη.
Καὶ τότε πάλιν τὸ παιδὶν 's τὴν μάναν του ὑπαγαίνει:
«Θέλεις, θέλεις, ἡ μάνα μου, νὰ τὸ ἀσκήσω ὀμπρός σου;»
Καὶ τότε πάλι ἡ μάνα του τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἐλάλει:
«Ἄμετε, ἰδέτε, οἱ ἄρχοντες, καὶ στρώσετε τὸν μαῦρον,
στρώσετε πάλιν, ἄρχοντες, τὸν μαῦρον τοῦ πατρός του,

11: The ancestral possession a general motif (LE 278, RA 799), but here with a particular point: the lance was seized by Armoures from Babylon, where he is now imprisoned.

The Lay of Armoures

Today is another sky, today another day;
today the sons of nobles will ride:
only the lord Armoures' son is not riding.
And then the child goes to his mother:
'May you rejoice in my brothers, mother—let me ride;
and may you see my father, mother—let me ride'.
And then Armoures' mother says to him:
'You are small and not of age—riding does not befit you;
but if, good son, you wish to ride,
upstairs hangs your father's lance;
your father carried it off from Babylon,
all gold above and below, with pearl studs;
and if you brandish it once and if you brandish it twice,
and if you brandish it three times, then you may ride.'
And the child, the little son of Armoures,
went up the stairs weeping, comes down laughing:
before he took it it was taken, before he shook it it was shaken;
he bound it to his arm and jinked and turned.
And then the child goes to his mother:
'Mother, do you want me, do you want me to practice with it before you?'
And then his mother spoke to the nobles:
'Come, look, nobles; and saddle the black horse;
once more, nobles, saddle his father's black horse,

20: The reading from Alexiou 1987: 60.

22: Again cf. RA 799; again fitted to the circumstances of frustration.

ὁποὺ ἔχει χρόνους δώδεκα εἰς νερὸν σιμὰ οὐκ ἐπῆεν,
ὁποὺ ἔχει χρόνους δώδεκα οὐδὲν καβαλικεύθη,
καὶ τρώει τὸ καρφοπέταλον, στέκει παλουκωμένον.»
Ἐδιέβησαν οἱ ἄρχοντες καὶ στρώνουν του τὸν μαῦρον·
ἔδωκεν 'ς τοὺς βραχίονες του καὶ εὑρέθη καβαλάρης.
Ὥστε νὰ εἴπῃ «ἔχετε ὑγείαν», ἐδιέβη τριάντα μίλια,
<καὶ> ὥστε νὰ τοῦ ἀπιλογηθοῦν, ἄλλα ἑξήντα πέντε.
Ἐκεῖ ἀνεβοκατέβαινε ἀντίπερα τοῦ Ἀφράτη,
ἀνέβη καὶ ἐκατέβη τον, πόρον οὐδὲν εὑρίσκει.
Σαρακηνὸς <ἀντίπερα> στέκει καὶ ἀναγελᾶ τον:
«Σαρακηνοὶ ἔχουσιν φαρία τὰ διώχνουν τοὺς ἀέρας,
τὴν φάσσαν καὶ τὴν πέρδικαν ἀπὸ πτεροῦ τὴν παίρνουν
καὶ τὸν λαγὸν 'ς τὸ ἀνήφορον ἀπὸ δρομοῦ τὸν σώνουν,
κρατοῦν καὶ κολακεύουν τα καὶ πάλι ἐξαπολοῦν τα
καὶ πάλιν δὲ ὅταν τοὺς φανῇ, τρέχουσιν, πιάνουσίν τα,
καὶ τὸν Ἀφράτην ποταμὸν οὐκ ἠμποροῦν περάσαι
καὶ ἐσὺ μὲ τὸ παρίππιν σου θέλεις νὰ τὸν περάσῃς;»
Τὸ νὰ τ' ἀκούσῃ ὁ νεώτερος, πολλὴν μανίαν ἐπῆρεν·
πτερνιστηρίαν τὸν μαῦρον του, διὰ νὰ περάσῃ πέρα.
Ἦτον ὁ Ἀφράτης δυνατός, ἦτον καὶ βουρκωμένος,
εἶχεν καὶ κύματα βαρέα, ἦτον καὶ ἀποχυμένος.
Στριγγέαν φωνίτσαν ἔσυρεν, ὅσην καὶ ἂν ἐδυνέτον:
«Εὐχαριστῶ σε, Θεὲ καλέ, καὶ μυριοευχαριστῶ σε·
ἐσὺ μὲ ἐδῶκες τὴν ἀνδρείαν καί Ἀφράτης μὲ τὴν παίρνει.»
Ἀγγελικὴ φωνὴ τοῦ ἦλθ' ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἀπάνω:
«Μπῆξε τὸ κονταράκιν σου 'ς τῆς φοινικέας τὴν ρίζαν
καὶ μπῆξε καὶ τὰ ροῦχα σου ὀμπρὸς 'ς τὸ μπροστοκούρβιν,
κέντησε καὶ τὸν μαῦρον σου καὶ νὰ περάσῃς πέρα.»
Πτερνιστηρίαν τὸν μαῦρον του κ' ἐπέρασέ τον πέρα.

24: The hero (like Andronikos in the MG song which is undoubtedly a relic of a comparable lay; Academy 1962: 59–61) will have been born just after his father's capture: he is now just twelve by a bit of unrealism which may have been discarded by RA, the closest in style of the E poems. In general, the dimensions of ARM are more heroic than those of the E poems.

41: With the possible exception of LE 62, μανία (here, running berserk) is an emotion lacking in the heroes of the E poems.

which for twelve years has not gone near water;
which for twelve years has not been ridden;
and it eats the nail in the shoe, stands tied to a post.'
The nobles went and saddle him the black horse:
with a somersault he was on horseback.
Before he could say 'Farewell', he went thirty miles;
and before they could reply, another sixty-five.
Then he went up and down the length of the Euphrates;
went up and down it, cannot find a ford.
A Saracen on the other side stands and mocks him:
'Saracens have steeds that chase the winds;
they catch wood pigeon and partridge by the wing;
and overtake hares in the chase on a slope,
and catch and pet them and then let them go—
but in turn, when they see fit, run and catch them.
But even they cannot cross the river Euphrates—
and you with your nag wish to cross it?'
When the youth heard it, he was overcome with great wrath:
he gave a spur to his black horse to cross to the other side.
The Euphrates was strong and it was turbid,
and it had swollen waves, and it was overflowing.
He let out a shrill cry, as loud as he was able:
'I thank Thee, good God, and a thousand times I thank Thee:
Thou gavest me my manhood, and the Euphrates takes it from me.'
An angelic voice came to him from the heavens above:
'Stick your lance at the palm-tree's root,
and stick your clothes over the front of the saddle,

46: This verse often used of a person in folk song shortly before his death (e.g. Academy 1962: 196).

47–8: To express thanks to God for misfortune may seem odd, but it is a known epic motif, found in the *Cid* (e.g.8–9): 'Thanks be to you, our Father on high! This has been brought upon me by my evil enemies.'; 'The Cid's laconic comment on his ill fortune may be seen both as Christian resignation and as righteous determination' (Michael 1975: 219).

Οὐχὶ ν' ἀφήσῃ κἂν τὰ ροῦχα του ὁ νέος νὰ στεγνώσουν,
πτερνιστηρίαν τὸν μαῦρον του εἰς τὸν Σαρακηνὸν ὑπάγει
καὶ σφόνδυλον τὸν ἔδωκε κ' ἐξεσαγόνιασέ τον:
«Εἰπέ, μωρὲ Σαρακηνέ, ποῦ ἔναι τὰ φουσάτα;»
«Θεέ μου, σαλὰ ρωτήματα τὰ ἔχουν οἱ ἀνδρειωμένοι,
πρῶτα νὰ κροῦν τὲς σφονδυλὲς καὶ τότε νὰ ρωτοῦσιν!
Μά τὸν κὺρ Ἥλιον τὸν γλυκύν, μά τὴν γλυκέαν του μάναν,
ἐψὲς ἐξεδιαλέχθημεν κἂν ἑκατὸν χιλιάδες,
ὅλοι καλοὶ καὶ ἐκλεκτοί, πρασινοσκουταράτοι.
ἔνι καὶ τέτοιοι ἀπὸ ἐκεινούς, οὐδὲ χιλίους φοβοῦνται,
οὐδὲ χιλίους, οὐδὲ μυρίους, οὐδὲ ὅσους ἀπαντήσουν!»
Πτερνιστηρίαν τὸν μαῦρον του, ἄνω εἰς βουνὶν ἀνέβη·
φουσάτα εἶδε κ' ἐγνώμιασεν, ἀριφνισμὸν οὐκ εἶχαν.
Καὶ τότε πάλε τὸ παιδὶν ἀνανογᾶται, λέγει:
«Ἂν τοὺς πηδήσω ἀρμάτωτους, πάντα καυχᾶσθαι θέλουν,
ὅτι τοὺς ηὗρα ἀρμάτωτους καὶ ἐπῆρα τους τὴν πρόβαν.»
Στριγγίαν φωνὴν ἐλάλησεν, ὅσην καὶ ἂν ἐδυνέτον:
«Σαρακηνοί, ἀρματώνεσθε, σκυλιά, λουρικωθῆτε·
λουρικωθῆτε γλήγορα, σκυλιὰ μαγαρισμένα·
εἰς ἀπιστίαν μὴν τό 'χετε ὅτι ἀπέρασεν ὁ Ἀρμούρης,
ὁ Ἀρμούρης, ὁ Ἀρμουρόπουλος, ὁ Ἀρέστης ὁ ἀνδρειωμένος.»
Μά τὸν κὺρ Ἥλιον τὸν γλυκύν, μά τὴν γλυκέαν του μάνα,
ὅσα ἄστρη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ φύλλα εἰς τὰ δένδρη
οὕτως ἐκατεπίπτασιν οἱ σέλες εἰς τοὺς μαύρους·
ἔστρωσαν καὶ ἐχαλίνωσαν, πηδοῦν, καβαλικεύουν.
Καὶ τότε πάλιν τὸ παιδὶν καὶ αὐτὸ καλοταρίστη·
ὡραῖον σπαθίτσιν ἔσυρεν ἀπὸ ἀργυρὸν φηκάριν,

54: We should perhaps delete του to restore the metre (admittedly with an unusual caesura).

75: Sound lovingly dwelt on as in MG folk song; paler examples in LE 59, 129;

and goad your horse and you will cross to the other side.'
A spur to his horse and he crossed to the other side.
And the youth did not even let his clothes dry,
but goaded his horse and goes at the Saracen,
and gave him a slap and dislocates his jaw:
'Tell me, Saracen you: where is the army?'
'My God, the valiant have a silly way of asking!
First to slap and then to ask!
By sweet Lord Sun, by his sweet mother,
yesterday we were picked, some hundred thousand,
all fine and picked with green shields—
and among them are such as do not fear a thousand,
not a thousand, not ten thousand, not as many as they may meet!'
A spur to his horse, he went up a mountain;
saw the army and counted it, it could not be numbered.
And then the child thinks, says:
'If I leap on them unarmed, they will always maintain
that I came on them when they were unarmed and tried conclusions with them thus.'
He uttered a shrill cry, as loud as he was able:
'Saracens, arm; dogs, put on your breastplates;
bind on your breastplates, filthy dogs—
do not doubt that Armoures has crossed the river,
Armoures, the son of Armoures, valiant Arestes!'
By sweet Lord Sun, by his sweet mother,
as many as the stars in the sky and the leaves on the trees,
so many saddles rained down on the black horses:
they saddle and bridle, mount, ride.
And then the child got in good order himself:
he drew a fine sword from a silver scabbard,

RA 797.

81–2: Again, MG folk song verses (cf. e.g. Academy 1962: 373), although there they have usually been turned to the case of a suicide

'ς τὸν οὐρανὸν τὸ ἀπέταξεν, 'ς τὸ χέριν του τὸ δέχθη.
Πτερνιστηρίαν τὸν μαῦρον του, ἐκεῖ κοντὰ ζυγώνει:
«'Απὸ τὸ γένος μου διαβῶ, ἂν σᾶς ἐλησμονήσω.»
Καὶ συγκροτᾷ τὸν πόλεμον καλὰ ‹καὶ› ἀνδρειωμένα·
τὰς ἄκρας ἄκρας ἔκοπτεν καὶ ἡ μέση ἐδαπανᾶτον.
Μά τὸν κὺρ"Ηλιον τὸν γλυκύν, μά τὴν γλυκέαν του μάνα
ὅλη μέρα τοὺς ἔκοπτεν τὴν ἄνω ποταμίαν
καὶ ὅλη νύκτα τοὺς ἔκοπτε τὴν κάτω ποταμίαν.
Ἔθεσεν καὶ ἀποθέσεν τους, κανένα δὲν ἀφῆκε.
'Απέζευσε ὁ νεώτερος νὰ τὸν βαρήση ὁ ἀέρας
καὶ ἕνα σκυλίν, Σαρακηνός, σκυλὶν μαγαρισμένον,
ἐγκρύμματα τὸν ἔβαλεν καὶ ἐπῆρε του τὸν μαῦρον,
ἐπῆρε του τὸν μαῦρον του, ἐπῆρε τὸ ραβδίν του.
Μά τὸν κὺρ Ἥλιον τὸν γλυκύν, μά τὴν γλυκέαν του μάναν,
σαράντα μίλια τὸν ἐδίωχνε πεζὸς μὲ τὸ λουρίκιν
καὶ ἄλλα σαράντα τέσσαρα πεζὸς μὲ τὰ γονάτια· 96a
ἐκεῖ τὸν ἐκατέφθασε εἰς τῆς Συρίας τὴν Πόρταν
καὶ ἐβγάνει τὸ σπαθίτσι του καὶ ἐπαίρνει του τὸ χέριν:
«Ἄμε, μωρὲ Σαρακηνέ, νὰ πῆς καὶ σὺ μαντάτον.»
'Ο κύρης του ἔξω ἐκάθετον, 'ς τῆς φυλακῆς τὴν πόρταν·
τὸν μαῦρον του ἀνεγνώρισεν καὶ τὸ ραβδὶν τοῦ υἱοῦ του,
τὸν καβαλάρη οὐδὲν θεωρεῖ καὶ πὰ νὰ βγῆ ἡ ψυχή του·
βαρέα βαρέα ἀναστέναξεν καὶ ἐσείστη ὁ πύργος ὅλος.
Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἐλάλει:
«Ἄμετε, ἰδέτε, οἱ ἄρχοντες, τί ἔχει καὶ ἀναστενάζει·
ἂν ἔν' τὸ γιόμα του κακόν, νὰ φάγη ἐκ τὸ δικόν μου,
εἶτ' ἔν' τὸ οἰνάριν του κακόν, νὰ πίη ἐκ τὸ δικόν μου,
εἴτε βρωμεῖ ‹του› ἡ φυλακή, νὰ τὴν μοσχοκαπνίσουν,
εἴτε ἔν' βαρέα τὰ σίδερα, νὰ τ' ἀλαφροκοπήσουν.»
Καὶ τότε πάλε ὁ 'Αρμούρης ‹μου› τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἐλάλει:
«Οὐδ' ἔν' τὸ γιόμαν μου κακὸν νὰ φάγω ἐκ τὸ δικόν του,

92–3: Saracens in the E poems are not generic but named for epic verisimilitude (LE 337, RA 928; but not LE 21 and 30—unless a name has dropped out). Here we have the generic untrustworthy Saracen of *Roland* 2274ff.

hurled it to the sky, caught it in his hand.
A spur to his horse, he arrives near them:
'May I not belong to my line if I forget you.'
And he sets to battle well and valiantly:
he set about chopping at the edges, and the middle was dwindling.
By sweet Lord Sun, by his sweet mother,
all day long he chopped them upstream,
and all night he chopped them downstream:
he pushed them here, he pushed them there, he left no-one alone.
The youth dismounted to catch the breeze;
and one dog, a Saracen, a filthy dog,
caught him unawares and took his black horse;
took his black horse, took his club.
By sweet Lord Sun, by his sweet mother,
forty miles he chased him on foot with his breastplate,
96a and another forty-five on foot with his greaves;
and then he caught up with him at the gateway to Syria,
and draws his sword and takes off his arm:
'Go on, Saracen you: take a message.'
His father was sitting out of doors, at the prison gate;
he recognized his black horse and his son's club—
he does not see the rider, and his heart is in his mouth;
deeply, deeply he groaned, and the whole castle shook.
And then the Emir said to the nobles:
'Go and look, nobles; see what is the matter that he groans.
If his food is bad, let him eat of mine;
if his wine is bad, let him drink of mine;
if his prison is dirty, let it be fumigated;
if his irons are heavy, let them be made lighter.'
And then my Armoures said to the nobles:
'My food is not bad, to eat of his;

100: Only now does Armoures *père* appear to view.
105ff: The folk song motif of the question that misses the mark (see Kakridis 1949: 108–20 for Homeric examples).

οὐδὲ τὸ οἰνάριν μου κακόν, νὰ πίω ἐκ τὸ δικόν του,
οὐδὲ βρωμεῖ μου ἡ φυλακή, νὰ τὴν μοσχοκαπνίσουν,
οὐδ' ἔν' βαρέα τὰ σίδερα, νὰ τ' ἀλαφροκοπήσουν:
τὸν μαῦρον μου ἀνεγνώρισα καὶ τὸ ραβδὶν τοῦ υἱοῦ μου,
τὸν καβαλάρη οὐδὲν θεωρῶ καὶ ὑπὰ νὰ ἐβγῆ ἡ ψυχή μου.»
Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς τὸν 'Αρμούρην ἐλάλει:
«Καρτέρησον, 'Αρμούρη μου, καρτέρησον ὀλίγον,
νὰ δώσουν τὰ ὄργανα βαρέα, τὰ βούκινα μεγάλα,
νὰ μαζωχθῆ ἡ Βαβυλωνία καὶ ὅλη ἡ Καππαδοκία
καὶ ὅπου καὶ ἂν ἔνι ὁ υἱόκας σου, πιστάγκωνα σ' τὸν φέρουν,
πιστάγκωνα καὶ ἐξάγκωνα ὀμπρός σου νὰ τὸν φέρουν.
'Ανέμενε, ὁ 'Αρμούρης μου, ἀνέμενε ἄλλο ὀλίγον.»
Κ' ἔδωσαν τὰ ὄργανα βαρέα, τὰ βούκινα μεγάλα,
νὰ μαζωχθῆ ἡ Βαβυλωνία καὶ ὅλη ἡ Καππαδοκία·
τινὰς οὐκ ἠμαζώνετον, μόνον ὁ κουτσοχέρης·
καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς τοῦ κουτσοχέρη ἐλάλει:
«Εἰπές, μωρὲ Σαρακηνέ, ποῦ ἔναι τὰ φουσάτα;»
Καὶ τότε ὁ Σαρακηνὸς τὸν ἀμιρὰν ἐλάλει:
«'Ανέμενε, ὁ αὐθέντης μου, ἀνέμενε ἄλλο ὀλίγον,
νὰ πάρουν φῶς τὰ ὀμμάτια μου καὶ ἡ ψυχή μου ἀέρα,
νὰ μαζωχθῆ τὸ αἷμαν μου εἰς τὸ καλόν μου χέριν
καὶ τότε νὰ σ' ἀφηγηθῶ τὸ ποῦ ἔναι τὰ φουσάτα.
Μά τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἄρχοντες, ἄστοχα σᾶς τὸ λέγω:
'Οψὲς ἐξεδιαλέχθημεν κἂν ἑκατὸν χιλιάδες,
ὅλοι καλοὶ καὶ ἐκλεκτοί, πρασινοσκουταράτοι·
ἦσαν καὶ τέτοιοι ἀπὸ ἐκεινούς, οὐδὲ χιλίους φοβοῦνται,
οὐδὲ χιλίους, οὐδὲ μυρίους, οὐδὲ ὅσους ἀπαντήσουν!
Μικρὸν παιδὶν ἐφάνηκεν ἀπάνου εἰς ἄγριον ὄρος·
στριγγέαν φωνίτσαν ἔσυρεν, ὅσην καὶ ἂν ἐδυνέτον:
'Σαρακηνοί, ἀρματώνεσθε, σκυλιά, λουρικωθῆτε·
εἰς ἀπιστίαν μὴν τό 'χετε ὅτι ἀπέρασεν ὁ 'Αρμούρης,

138: A reminder of the hero's size.

my wine is not bad, to drink of his;
112a my prison is not dirty, to be fumigated;
my irons are not heavy, to be made lighter.
I recognized my black horse and my son's club,
but I do not see the rider, and my heart is in my mouth.'
And then the Emir said to Armoures:
'Wait, Armoures, wait a little:
let the deep organs sound, the great trumpets,
for Babylon and all Cappadocia to be gathered together;
and wherever your dear son is, he shall be brought to you with his hands tied behind his back,
with his hands tied up and tied behind his back he shall be brought before you.
Wait, my Armoures, wait a little longer.'
And the deep organs sounded, the great trumpets,
for Babylon and all Cappadocia to be gathered together.
No-one gathered together—only the man with one arm.
And then the Emir said to the man with one arm:
'Tell me, Saracen you: where is the army?'
And then the Saracen said to the Emir:
'Wait, my master, wait a little longer,
for my eyes to take light and my soul air,
for my blood to gather in my good arm—
and then I shall relate to you the whereabouts of the army:
in truth, nobles, I shall tell you without care for the consequences.
Yesterday we were picked, some hundred thousand,
all fine and picked, with green shields;
and there were such among them as fear not a thousand,
not a thousand, not a hundred thousand, not as many as they meet.
A small boy appeared up on a wild mountain;
he let out a shrill cry, as loud as he was able:
"Saracens, arm; dogs, put on your breastplates.
let no-one doubt that Armoures has crossed the river,

ὁ 'Αρμούρης, ὁ 'Αρμουρόπουλος, τ' 'Αρμούρη ὁ υἱός,
'Αρέστης.'
Μά τὸν κὺρ Ἥλιον τὸν γλυκύν, μά τὴν γλυκέαν του μάναν,
ὅσα ἄστρη εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ φύλλα εἰς τὰ δένδρη
οὕτως ἐκατεπίπτασιν οἱ σέλες εἰς τοὺς μαύρους·
ἔστρωσαν καὶ ἐχαλίνωσαν, πηδοῦν, καβαλικεύουν.
Καὶ τότε πάλιν τὸ παιδίν, καὶ τότε ὁ 'Αρμουροπούλης,
ὡραῖον σπαθίτσιν ἔσυρεν ἀπὸ ἀργυρὸν φηκάριν· 149
'ς τὸν οὐρανὸν τ' ἀπέταξεν, 'ς τὸ χέριν του τὸ ἐδέχθη. 150
Πτερνιστηρίαν τὸν μαῦρον του, ἐκεῖ κοντὰ ζυγώνει:
' 'Απὸ τὸ γένος μου διαβῶ, ἂν σᾶς ἐλησμονήσω.'
Τὰς ἄκρας ἄκρας ἔκοπτε κ' ἡ μέση ἐδαπανᾶτον.
Μά τὸν κὺρ Ἥλιον τὸν γλυκύν, μά τὴν γλυκέαν του μάναν,
ὅλη μέρα μᾶς ἔκοπτεν τὴν ἄνω ποταμίαν
καὶ ὅλη νύκτα μᾶς ἔκοπτεν τὴν κάτω ποταμίαν·
ἔθεσεν καὶ ἀποθέσεν μας, κανένα οὐδὲν ἀφήνει
καὶ ἐπέζευσεν ὁ νεώτερος διὰ νὰ τὸν δώση ὁ ἀέρας.
Καὶ ἐγὼ ὡς καλὸς καὶ φρόνιμος ἐγκρύμματα τὸν βάνω,
ἐγκρύμματα τὸν ἔβαλα καὶ ἐπῆρα του τὸν μαῦρον· 160
ἐπῆρα του τὸν μαῦρον του, ἐπῆρα τὸ ραβδίν του. 160a
Μά τὸν κὺρ Ἥλιον τὸν γλυκύν, μά τὴν γλυκέαν του μάναν,
σαράντα μίλια μὲ ἔδιωχνεν πεζὸς μὲ τὰ γονάτια
καὶ ἄλλα σαράντα τέσσαρα πεζὸς μὲ τὸ λουρίκιν·
ἐδῶ κοντὰ μὲ ἔφθασεν, εἰς τῆς Συρίας τὴν Πόρταν
καὶ σύρνει τὸ σπαθίτσιν του καὶ ἐπαίρνει μου τὸ χέριν:
' Ἄμε, μωρὲ Σαρακηνέ, νὰ εἰπῆς καὶ ἐσὺ μαντάτον.' »
Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς τὸν 'Αρμούρην ἐλάλει:
«Καλὰ εἶναι αὐτά, ὁ 'Αρμούρης μου, τὰ κάμνει ὁ υἱός
σου;»
Καὶ τότε πάλι ὁ 'Αρμούρης μου ὡραῖον χαρτίτσιν γράφει·
μὲ τὸ πουλὶν τὸ ἀπέστειλεν, τ' ὡραῖον χελιδονάκι: 170
«Εἰπὲ τῆς σκύλας τὸν υἱόν, τῆς ἀνομίας τὸ τέκνον·

Armoures, the son of Armoures, Armoures' son, Arestes."
By sweet Lord Sun, by his sweet mother,
as many as the stars in the sky and the leaves on the trees,
so many saddles rained down on the black horses:
they saddled and bridled, mount, ride.
And then the boy, and then the son of Armoures,
drew a fine sword from a silver scabbard:
he threw it in the air, caught it in his hand.
A spur to his horse, he arrives nearby:
"May I not belong to my line if I forget you."
He set about chopping from both ends and the middle was dwindling:
By sweet Lord Sun, by his sweet mother,
all day long he chopped at us upstream,
and all night long he chopped at us downstream:
he drove us here, he drove us there, leaves no-one alone.
But the youth dismounted to catch the breeze;
and I, as a good, sensible fellow, take him unawares;
took him unawares and took his black horse from him:
took his black horse, took his club.
By sweet Lord Sun, by his sweet mother,
forty miles he chased me on foot with greaves,
and another forty-five on foot with his breastplate.
Near here he catches up with me, at the gateway to Syria;
and he draws his sword and takes off my arm:
"Go on, Saracen you: take a message."'
And then the Emir said to Armoures:
'Is this good work, Armoures, that your son does?'
And then my Armoures writes a fine letter;
he sent it with a bird, a fine swallow:
'Tell the son of a bitch, the child of lawlessness,

159: The Saracen's change in the repeated narrative indicates his character.
169: So, famously, 'My Cid' (*Cid passim*).

ὅπου εὑρῇ Σαρακηνόν, νὰ τὸν ἐλεημονᾶται,
μὴ λάχῃ εἰς τὰς χεῖρας του καὶ ἐλεημοσύνη οὐκ ἔχει.»
Καὶ τότε πάλιν τὸ παιδὶν ὡραῖον χαρτίτσιν γράφει·
μὲ τὸ πουλὶν τὸ ἀπέστειλεν, τ' ὡραῖον χελιδονάκιν:
«Εἰπέτε τὸν αὐθέντη μου καὶ τὸν γλυκύν μου κύρην,
ἕως οὗ βλέπω τὰ ὀσπίτια μας διπλομανταλωμένα,
ἕως οὗ βλέπω τῆν μάναν μου τὰ μαῦρα φορεμένην
καὶ βλέπω καὶ τὰ ἀδέλφια μου τὰ μαῦρα φορεμένα,
ὅπου εὑρῶ Σαρακηνὸν τὸ αἷμα του νὰ πίνω.
Καὶ ἂν μὲ παραμανίσουσιν, εἰς τὴν Συρίαν νὰ πέσω,
τὰ στενορύμια τῆς Συρίας κεφάλια νὰ γεμίσω,
τὰ ξηρορυάκια τῆς Συρίας αἷμα νὰ τὰ γεμίσω.»
Τὸ νὰ τ' ἀκούσῃ ὁ ἀμιράς, πολλὰ τὸν ἐφοβήθη.
Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς τοὺς ἄρχοντας ἐλάλει:
«'Αμέτε, ἀμέτε, οἱ ἄρχοντες, βγάλετε τὸν 'Αρμούρην
καὶ ἀμέτε τον εἰς τὸ λουτρόν, διὰ νὰ λουστῇ, ν' ἀλλάξῃ·
στὸ γιόμαν μου τὸν φέρετε, νὰ φάγῃ μετ' ἐμένα.»
'Εδιέβησαν οἱ ἄρχοντες καὶ ἐβγάνουν τὸν 'Αρμούρην,
βγάνουν τον ἐκ τὰ σίδερα καὶ ἐκ τὰ βαρέα χερόψια.
Εἰς τὸ λουτρὸν τὸν διέβησαν καὶ ἐλούστη καὶ ἀλλάσσει,
's τὸν ἀμιρὰν τὸν διέβησαν κ' ἐγεύθη μετ' ἐκεῖνον.
Καὶ τότε πάλιν ὁ ἀμιρὰς τὸν 'Αρμούρην ἐλάλει:
«Ἄμε, ἄμε, ὁ 'Αρμούρης μου, ἄμε εἰς τὰ γονικά σου,
καὶ παίδευε καὶ τὸ παιδίν, γαμπρὸν τὸν θέλω πάρειν,
οὐδὲ εἰς τὴν ἀνιψίαν μου, οὐδὲ εἰς τὴν ἐξαδέλφην,
μόνον 's τὴν θυγατέραν μου, τὴν ἔχω φῶς καὶ ὀμμάτια.»

wherever he find a Saracen, to take pity on him;
lest he fall into his clutches and find no mercy.'
And then the boy writes a fine letter;
he sent it with a bird, a fine swallow:
'Tell my master, my sweet father:
until I see our house locked and bolted,
until I see my mother dressed in black,
and see my brothers and sisters dressed in black,
wherever I find a Saracen I shall drink his blood.
And if they enrage me further I shall descend on Syria;
I shall fill the alleys of Syria with heads;
I shall fill the river-beds of Syria with blood.'
When the Emir heard it he was greatly afraid of him;
and then the Emir spoke to the nobles;
'Come, come, nobles; release Armoures:
let him go to the bath to wash and change;
bring him to my feast, that he may eat with me.'
The nobles went and release Armoures:
they release him from the irons and the heavy manacles.
They took him to the bath and he washed and changes;
they took him to the Emir and he feasted with him.
And then the Emir spoke to Armoures:
'Come, come, my Armoures; go to your family home,
and bring up your boy: I want him for son-in-law—
not for my niece, nor for my cousin,
but for my daughter, who is my light and eyes.'

184: The verse is reworked for a different situation by the poet of LE 132.

SELECT GLOSSARY OF PROPER NAMES

AARON: Harun ar Rashid, eighth-century Abbasid caliph, seen as father of the Emir

AMORI: (Amorion) city of Asia Minor, NW of Konion

APOCHALPES: (Abu Halp) friend or relative of the Emir

ARMOURES: apparently a Byzantine general captured by the Syrians; also his son Arestes

ARESTES: son of Armoures and his liberator from the hands of the Syrians; the name appears to preserve that of the Byzantine general Orestes (fl.900), who did cross the Euphrates into Mesopotamia

ASSASSINS: fanatical Muslim sect, based at Himş

BABYLON: ancient city on the Euphrates, and therefore in the vicinity of Baghdad on the Tigris (it appears to stand for Baghdad at 234 and 724); also a city in Egypt near Cairo (536)

BASRA: the context (233) makes it likely that by Pastrá is meant this city of far south-eastern Syria, towards the Gulf, rather than Bosra far to the west

CHALKOPETRIN: 'Copper Mine', probably a generic name

CHOSROES: Chosroes II of Persia (AD 590-628)

CONSTANTINE: youngest brother of the Emir's bride and favourite uncle of Akrites

DOUKAS: great family of Asia Minor, to which Akrites' maternal grandfather belongs (perhaps based on a historical Andronikos Doukas)

GIANNAKES: leading raider

HALAB: Aleppo, city of north-western Syria

HELLENES: the ancient Greeks, the pagans

HERAKLEION: Herakleos (732), Heraklin (946), city SE of Konion, present-day Ereğli, sacked by the Emir

HERMON: river between Asia Minor and Syria

HIMŞ: city of western Syria

IKEA: lake of unknown location

KAROELES: the Emir's brother
KINNAMOS, LEOS: leading raider; the name may reflect a memory of a Parthian leader of the first century
KIR-MAGASTRI: family of the Emir's wife's mother, perhaps from the Cilician city Magarsos
KONION: (Ikonion, present-day Konya), leading city in Asia Minor
LIANDROS: associate of Maximou
LYKANDOS: city in Asia Minor and seat of a Byzantine general (present-day Kislar Kahsi)
MAÏAKES: friend or relative of the Emir
MAXIMOU: an Amazon figure; it may be relevant that the name Maxima or 'the Amazon' is found in an inscription of the second century at Sebasteia (present-day Sivas)
MILIMITSES: from an Arab name; a henchman of Maximou
MOURSTASIT: (Mustarshid) brother of the Emir's mother
MOUSELOM: the Emir's paternal grandfather
MOUSES: (Musa) friend or relative of the Emir
MOUSOUPHRES: A Saracen
MOUSOUROS: (Mansur) name of the Emir at 723 (and possibly at the lost beginning of the MS also)
MYLOKOPEIA: city of Asia Minor, east of Konion
NIKOMEDEIA: city on the Propontis
ORAZAVOURON: city of Syria, perhaps Dayr az Zawr
PARSA-GARDA: seat of the ancient Persian kings
PHILOPAPPOUS: the senior raider; the name probably a recollection of the name of the king of Commagene, and Roman consul AD 109
PRAINETOS: city on the Propontis
RAQQAH: (surviving) castle in Syria, on the Euphrates, and seat of Harun and the Emir
ROMANIA: the land of the Romans, i.e. the Eastern Roman or Byzantine empire
SAMOSATA: city in northern Syria on the Euphrates
SOUDALES: Saracen in the service of the father of Akrites' bride
ST THEODORE: military saint of Pontus
ZYGOS: (Antitauros) mountain range in Asia Minor

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